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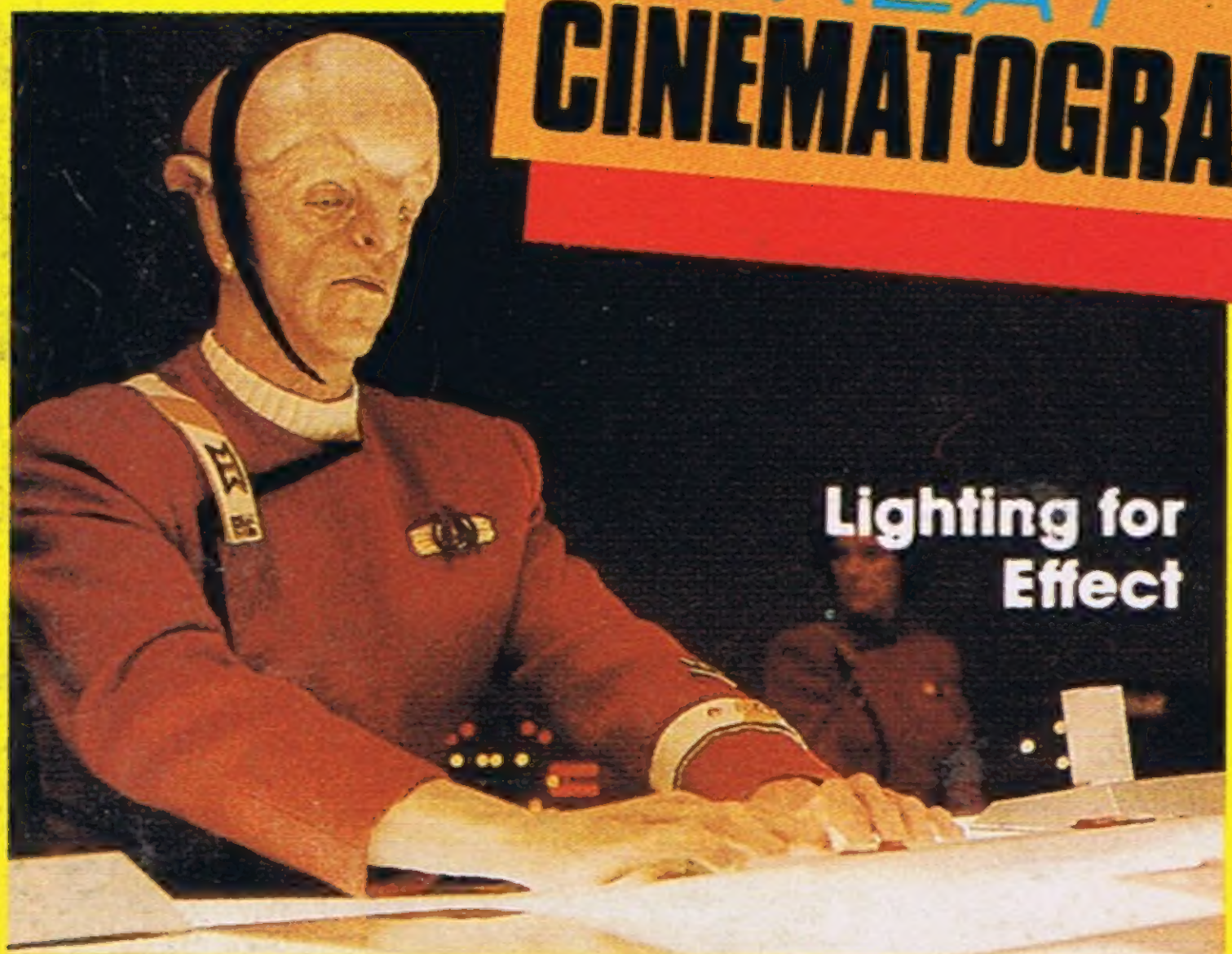
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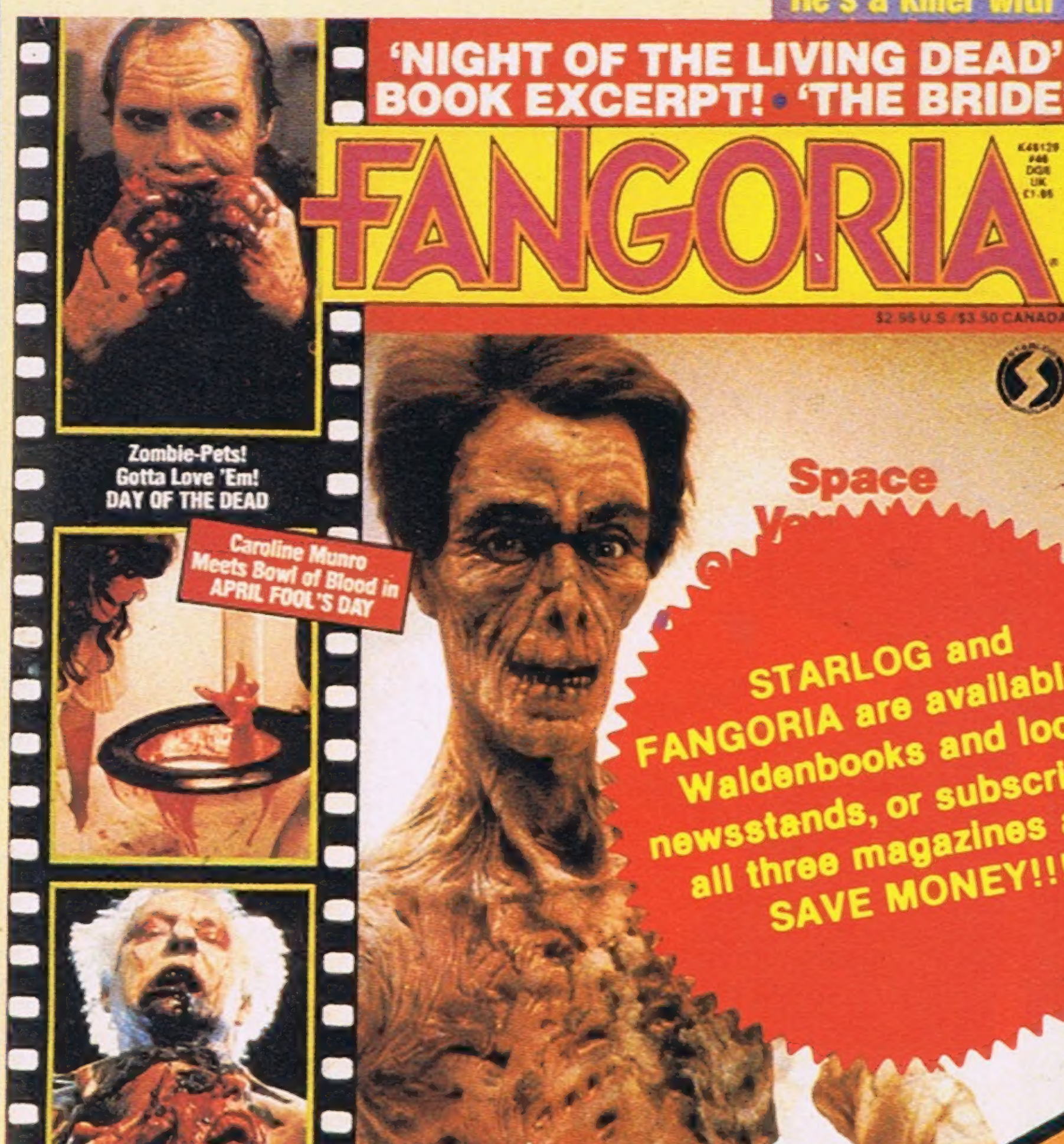
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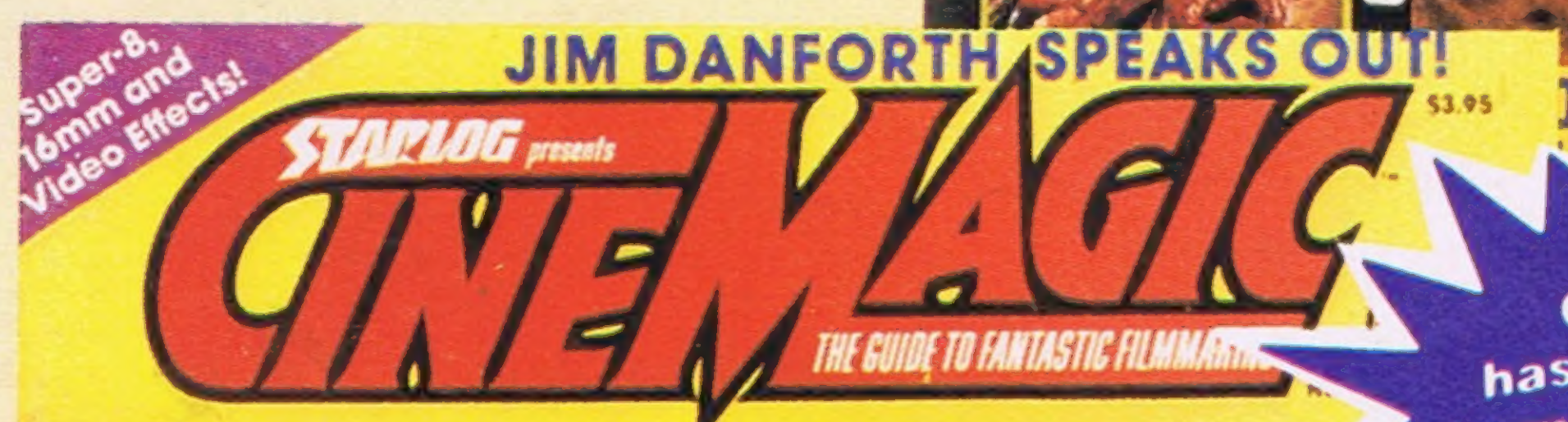
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Issue #36

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# Editor's BENCH

**T**his issue begins with a fascinating account of a low budget video series produced with the resources of a local cable station. The production problems encountered by writer/director Eric Gilmartin are common to both video and film; perhaps his experiences will give you a realistic perspective on the challenges of low-or-no budget production.

Paul Mandell has given us another of his richly detailed looks into the heritage of modern fantasy filmmaking with the story behind the making of Ray Harryhausen's *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*.

Ray Harryhausen visited the May STARLOG Festival in New York a few months ago. In addition to answering questions about the animation techniques used to create his own fantasy films, he took a few moments to pay tribute to George Pal, creator of the Academy Award winning Puppets from the 1940s. A compilation of some of the Pal Studio's finest stop-motion fantasies has been assembled for release this summer by Arnold Leibovit, who recently produced a retrospective on Pal's career. The Puppets are stop-motion animated, but not in the manner of Willis O'Brien or Ray Harryhausen. Pal utilized the technique of replacement animation in which a new figure is used from frame to frame. The process contrasts with Ray Harryhausen's in that all the creative animation is done on paper long before a frame of film is shot; with the more common Harryhausen-style animation, the creative work happens in front of the cameras as the puppet is manipulated frame by frame. Produced on a lavish scale, Pal's replacement animation achieved a unique style that is surprisingly modern after almost 50 years.

Another milestone is saluted as Disney's *Snow White* celebrates its 50th anniversary. A detailed story takes you behind-the-scenes with the Disney animators as they reminisce about what was known as "Disney's folly."

The Careers section, which appears from time to time, focuses on the accomplishments of professionals in the business. In this issue, cinematographer Gerald Finnerman shares some of his experiences with two well-known TV series: *Star Trek* and *Moonlighting*. Finnerman's personal account is filled with useful tips for your own productions as well as lending advice to those who are seeking a career in Hollywood.

I have expanded this issue's Festivals section to include news of the scientific and technical Oscars, which get short-changed in the annual TV coverage. Additionally, Eastman Kodak and the American Society of Cinematographers has supplied us with a story about with the Oscar-nominated cinematographers, who took the time to share their insights into a highly competitive craft.

In issue #33 we printed Rex Piano's story of first job in the movie business. It proved so popular that I asked Rex if he had anymore stories to share. I think you will enjoy his "Further Adventures of a Production Assistant."

—David Hutchison

By the time you read this, entry forms will be available for the next CINEMAGIC Short Film Search. The deadline for this year's entries is October 15. For your copy of the complete rules, entry forms and mailing labels send a self-addressed, stamped #10 envelope to:

CINEMAGIC Short Film Search Rules  
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# Video Diary: Making "Beyond Tomorrow"



By ERIC GILMARTIN

*"You don't have to be crazy to work here—but it helps!"*

—Unofficial motto of the *Beyond Tomorrow* crew.

**S**eptember 18, 1984. Tonight I had a conversation with my friends The Two Roberts. Actually, their names are Robert Levin and Robert Salzer, but sometimes I require some mental shorthand to keep things moving. Anyhow, I can tell them apart so that's not important. What is important, is that The Two Roberts want to get into movie production.

Actually, it's *video* production that interests Robert Levin (the older, dark-haired one). He tells me that he has this concept for a six-part TV series to consist of science-fiction and fantasy stories featuring different characters every episode, a la *Twilight Zone*. He wants to call his show *Beyond Tomorrow*, and he wants to produce it at the local public-access TV station where I've been slaving over a hot camera tube for over two years. And he wants *me* to write some scripts for his new show, and direct the first episode myself.

"Sounds interesting," I tell him, but inwardly I'm not so certain about the idea. I'm pretty burnt out on video these days; I never wanted to spend so much time just doing camera work on other productions because I have *stories* I want to tell. True, Levin's show offers me the opportunity to tell them; but we'll be awfully limited by the constraints of the video medium. Only

what we can stuff into the tube during the actual shoot can be seen in the final product, so FX won't be a consideration. Also, we'll be forced to participate in a rotating calendar system for camera use, so compiling enough footage for even one show could keep us busy on principal photography alone for, oh, as long as three months. And the final results won't give Spielberg any sleepless nights.

More importantly, The Two Roberts haven't gotten any recent video experience to get them going on such a project. The last TV stuff Robert Levin did was back in his college days—a hundred years ago from the sound of it. They'll have to train all over again at the public-access station. It stacks up as a dim prospect.

Naturally, I accept.

Perhaps my brain has sprung a leak. I tell Levin that I will deliver to him a half-

hour, two-act teleplay by the end of this month.

I even sign a contract to this effect, with Rob Salzer there to witness it. Do I need to see a psychiatrist? Didn't Rob Salzer and I just spend the entire summer trying to make one dumb Super-8 movie to no avail? Can't we learn from our mistakes? Shouldn't we get into a *saner* occupation?

Gee, I hope not. I've never enjoyed pain more in my entire life!

**September 30.** They said it couldn't be done . . . and they were wrong. I finished my script this afternoon, with only about seven hours to go on my self-imposed deadline. What really gets me about this feat, though, is that I started writing it *this morning*! (Actually, that's stretching the truth a wee bit. I've been scribbling notes about dialogue and stage directions ever since the 18th. But today is the first time I sat down to even attempt to write the actual script).

I call the Two Roberts to tell them the good news. Levin wants to read my script. I tell him he'll get the chance pretty soon.

**October 4.** Robert Levin reads my script, "The Gilded Cage," and even though he's pleased with it, he tells me—quite rightly, I think—that we'll be lucky to actually get it produced. Considering the scale of the project, I agree with him.

"The Gilded Cage" concerns an amnesia-stricken young man who finds himself in an elegant country mansion set on an estate as large as a golf course. He has considerable creature comforts and vast wealth to keep him happy there, as well as a small army of servants to whom his every wish is their command. But when he tries to leave the grounds—they threaten to kill him! He is, in effect, a prisoner of his own luxury, a "bird in a gild-

Author/Director Eric Gilmartin rehearses a scene.





ed cage" (hence, the title). The story is self-contained and can be told in thirty minutes. Levin does have a point, though: where in Santa Barbara can we find such an estate to film our show? True, there are movie stars who live in such homes here. . . but we don't know any of them personally. We'll look into it anyhow.

**November.** Reluctantly, after many failed attempts to put together some locations and interiors that would work, Robert Levin and I have decided to put "The Gilded Cage" upon the back burner. Now, of course, we go back to square zero: I have to write another script. It must be gripping, intense science-fiction drama, but on a very *small* scale. Well, methinks, this won't be a problem; I'm just chock full of good story ideas these days.

Incidentally, The Two Roberts have taken the training class at the public-access TV station. Now, all we need is a script. . . .

**April 1985.** I can't believe this. The well has truly run dry. It is devoid of water. Arid. Moisture-free. (OK, OK, you scream, we get the idea!) As a writer, I have had five truly terrible months.

In fact, coming up with an original story has so taxed my brains, that Robert Levin is thinking of forgetting the whole thing. I can't let him down, but neither can I create any kind of good original yarn for the first episode, either.

**Mid-April:** Well, I have been able to write something original for *Beyond Tomorrow*—sort of. I consider it to be potentially the finest sixty seconds or so of screen material I've ever penned.

Sixty seconds?!

Yes. Well, that's the running time of the distinctive *Beyond Tomorrow* opening sequence I've just written. Our show needs a trademark opening shot that would set the tone and mood for the episode to come, something eerie and unique along the lines of Rod's *Twilight Zone* intro.

Here's what I've come up with:

FADE IN:

1. EXT. SKY—NIGHT

A velvet backdrop littered with bright hard stars and a veil of colored gases, a nebula. A single twinkle of light in screen center grows into a supernova which washes out the entire FRAME in white light.

NARRATOR'S VOICE  
(OFF SCREEN)

Ours is a Universe full of wonders. The great mysteries of Existence are not out of reach in the vastness of Space. They are not lying buried and forgotten in the dead Past, not waiting to be discovered in the unimaginable Future. The most alien landscape is often your own backyard, and the first step to Eternity can be taken just. . . Beyond Tomorrow.

Intellectual without being pretentious. Spooky without being threatening. Mystical without being vague. But the very *best* thing about this opening, as a fellow videophile is quick to observe to me, is that it *sounds* like a really *cheap* show. Try making somebody's backyard pass for an alien landscape. Isn't that the entire point to low-budget SF moviemaking? Isn't that, in fact, the CINEMAGIC philosophy?

Robert Levin loves it. Then again, what choice has he got? Let *him* write it better if he thinks he can. But apart from that, no script yet. . . .

**July.** I want to direct something, anything, to get some experience before I tackle this *Beyond Tomorrow* project. So, I'm going to accept a local band's offer to direct their first video. Rob Salzer will operate the lights and work the main video camera.

**August.** Aaaargh!! The band has dropped out of our video! When brains were being handed out, they were probably going out for more beer. My directing career has ended before it really started. Oh, well, at least this means I can get back to what really matters to me: getting *Beyond Tomorrow* off the ground.

**October.** Bless my sainted mother's heart! She's pulled my fat out of the fire. She's given me renewed confidence in the future. Mostly, what she's done is given me the story for the first (official) *Beyond Tomorrow* script.

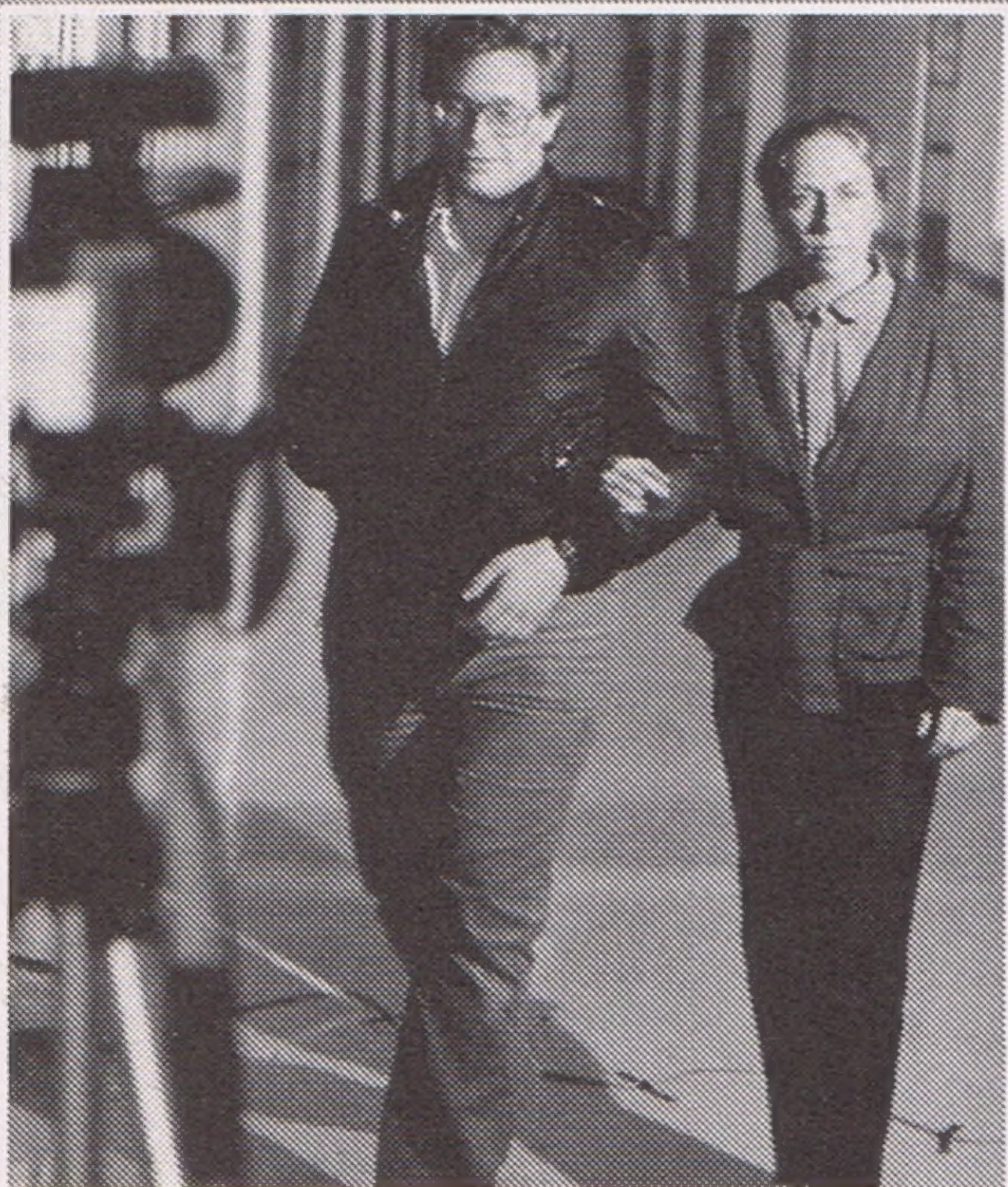
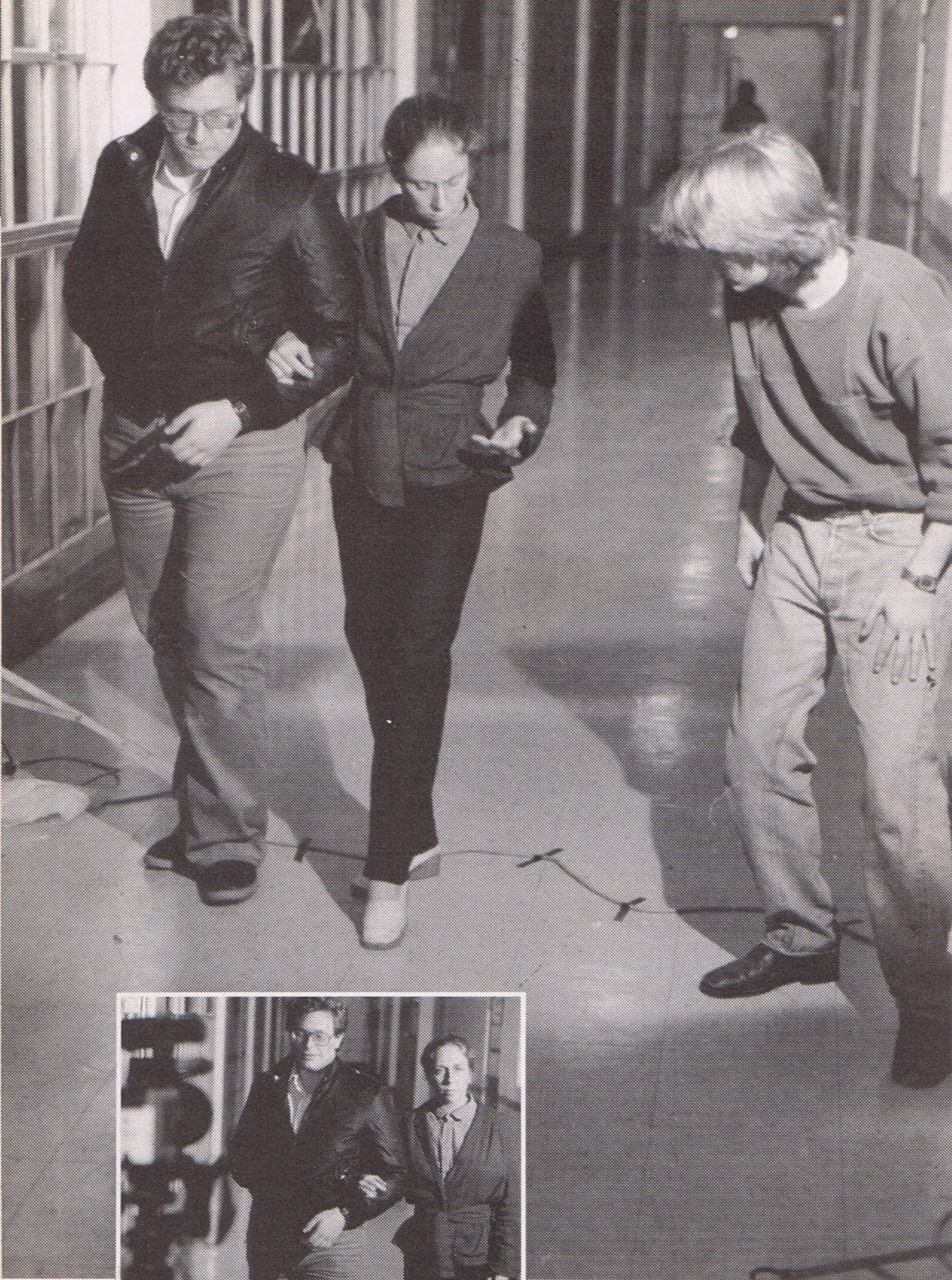
A few years ago, when she was pursuing

Something interesting is happening on the playback monitor during the shooting for "The Perfect Robot Baby" as actress Leah Battle tries to get a look.





Gilmartin rehearses actors Andrew Tuttle and Lynelle Paulick in "The Perfect Robot Baby."



her bustling creative writing career, my mom published a short story called "The Perfect Robot Baby" in *Woman's Day*. This little tale concerned the Hardings, a futuristic couple who seek to complete their successful lives with a child of their own. Because they cannot conceive one of their own, they decide to adopt one. And, as the title indicates, they decide to get an android child, because the warranty dupes them into believing that an android would be easier to raise.

Knowing of my year-long struggle to craft a script for this project, my mom pulls out an old copy of this story and

challenges me thusly: "Here you go. Do something with *this*. At least you'll get some writing practice in, and break your block."

I start adapting her story, scene by scene, into a working teleplay, in the late afternoon one day. By ten the next morning, I've finished the script, all twenty-four pages of it.

Robert Levin reads it, agrees that it will make a perfect (pun intended) first episode, and wants me to cast it early so that we can get as much rehearsal time in as possible.

The script—a close transition of the story my mom wrote a decade ago—calls for five characters (counting, of course, the Narrator). Mr. Harding, wise, decisive, but burdened by the awesome realities of parenthood; his long-suffering but valiant wife, Mrs. Harding; and their mechanical daughter, Jessica (called Melissa in my mom's story, so I used some creative

license). Jessica is a small part, considering that she's only seen in the second act, whereas the adult Hardings are in every scene, top to bottom in the script.

Adding to the challenge of playing Mr. and Mrs. Harding is the time span of the story: eighteen years from "Fade In" to "Fade Out." Clever acting and good makeup will be needed to make the characters gently move across the years. Of course, it won't hurt if my directing of the actors is effective, too.

The fourth and final story character is both the easiest character to cast . . . and the toughest. The mysterious "Manager" of the Perfect Robot Baby Company appears in three crucial scenes with Mr. and Mrs. Harding . . . sort of. "Manager" is never seen in the story, only heard; in description, my mom never used pronouns for Manager, so we don't even know what the gender of the character is, or, in fact, whether the character is even a human being! I have decided that in the video play, "Manager" won't be directly seen, and the character's voice will be electronically emulated using some kind of keyboard synthesizer to de-sex the voice, thus adding further mystery and science-fiction atmosphere to this episode.

**November.** The problem now: who to cast in my show. Sometimes the most obvious solution to a problem is the best one. I try not to continually think of using the same people in roles, because (1) it tends to typecast them, and (2) it prevents me from having the growth experience of working with many different kinds of actors. However, in the case of "Perfect Robot Baby" I have cast two roles, Mr. Harding and Jessica, with two of my most obvious choices. In fact, these people were my *first* choices for each role.

Andrew Tuttle, friend for nearly seven years and a damn good actor, seems a natural to play Mr. Harding. All that stage acting he's done, doing stuff by some guy named Will Shakespeare, shouldn't hurt; moreover, he *looks* the part. I have always thought to put him into roles that require a great power and authority, and Andy is certainly, if nothing else, authoritative.

As his inhuman, yet all too human, daughter, I've decided to cast Leah Battle, another old friend. She doesn't have the stage training that Andy has, but she is an avid science-fiction fan, a model for the Labelle Agency here in town, and knows as much about moviemaking as I do—maybe more! Also, like Andy, she's been cast in a couple of my early projects which collapsed prior to any actual shooting, so she wants some kind of part—*any* part, at this point.

They both accept the offer to work on this teleplay immediately with some reservations, of course. They want to be sure that this isn't a case of Eric G. crying,



"Wolf!" again. But after reading the script, they are reassured enough to plan their schedules around nighttime rehearsals.

As for Mrs. Harding: I don't have anybody in mind, but I don't need to look very far. Andy sends a friend of his from acting class at Santa Barbara City College over to meet me. As soon as I meet Lynelle Paulick, I realize that we already know each other... sort of. She is my ex-landlord's girl friend. Small world! She likes the script, thinking that, as somebody who is *not* an SF fan, it would make an interesting departure from her usual "realistic" stage work.

We rehearse. The sparks really fly between Leah and the other two. I can see where the troubled parent-child relationship depicted in the second act will really come to life vividly on screen. After three rehearsals, Robert Levin and I decide that this cast is as good as it's ever going to get. Levin decides to schedule a shooting night for the beginning of principal video photography as soon as possible. The magic bus is on the road!

**Early December.** We're all set to go, according to Levin. One of the staff interns down at the TV station, he tells me in hushed tones, will be in touch with me soon, just prior to our first "*Beyond Tomorrow*" episodic shoot. Seems that he wants to grill me on what kind of equipment and what size crew I'll be needing for that night. Sounds like routine stuff to me, but who knows...?

**December 10, 1985.** Our first shoot night! And, as you might expect, a night beset by problems. What kind and how many? Oh, where do I begin the list?

I pick up Robert Levin (who doesn't own a car, or even drive) and only *then* does he tell me how to get to his friend Brian Vitali's home. Brian is an attorney in whose private office we will shoot scene six from my script tonight, in which the young, optimistic Hardings meet with "Manager" to finalize the deal to purchase a daughter, so to speak. We swing by the studio, pick up our gear... and get a shock! There are no crew members assigned out of the talent pool to our shoot!

We're told that, because my friend at the TV studio couldn't reach me by phone, he didn't bother to call any people to work on "Robot Baby." Aaaargh!! On top of that, they've given us a half-inch camera setup (most of my previous video experience is with three-quarter-inch video equipment!). It's a good thing that all of my experience to date has been as camera operator; looks as though I'll be learning from the bottom up tonight with this new gear.

Could the fates be trying to tell me something?

We meet Andrew and Lynelle at Brian's house. As soon as we start to set up we get a phone call from Rob Salzer... and the bad news increases exponentially. He can't make it tonight; he has no transpor-

tation. We only have the equipment on a four-hour loan and, by the time I pick him up and come back...

Aaaargh!! again. *They didn't give us a video cassette!!* What did I do to deserve this? Forty-five minutes of precious time is lost whilst I drive back to the studio to retrieve the invaluable cassette. When I return, we find a new problem: the video equipment won't adapt to the two-hole plugs in the house. Fortunately, it only takes us a half-hour or thereabouts of precious shoot time to drive to a nearby store to buy a three-hole adaptor!

But the *best* problem occurs once these other troubles have been dealt with. I don't know how to operate this half-inch camera! Guess who bails me out? Andrew Tuttle, Master Thespian, that's who! He really makes me look like a dunce and a half by trial-and-erroring his way about. He explains it to me like a teacher in elementary school coping with a problem student.

Finally, more than two hours into our shoot time, we begin. Andre and Lynelle are well-rehearsed, their performances polished, their abilities displayed at their

and Earth, or bomb the *Death Star* to do it!

P.S. With barely an hour and forty-five minutes to do it, we shoot scene six, more than three pages of dialogue out of the original twenty-four. With a larger cast and crew, we should be able to do this much more quickly the next time and get this show in the can, so to speak, by March sometime.

**January 1986.** With the new year there are always sweeping changes in our lives. The public-access TV studio is moving its location across town, so there won't be any chance for access users such as ourselves to check out the camera gear throughout the month. On the other hand, this allows me the opportunity to rehearse our small cast again and really polish their performances still further.

Good news, for a change: My old friend Eric Tolle has agreed (and by extension, so have his parents) to lend us his spacious three-story house for our production. The Tolle house is now the Harding house, as soon as we are able to shoot in it. Eric and I collaborated on the first science-fiction video he ever wrote and directed, back when he was in his junior year at high

Actress Leah Battle hits her camera mark in a tense scene.



very peaks. Fortunately, what I lack in both technical expertise and patience, I make up for in knowledge of my script and of what I want as a director. Because I have to run camera tonight all alone, and direct the cast, I feel quite a bit like a "keyhole director;" even the actors confess that they'd do better with my undivided attention to their performances and not to whether they're both in frame in a given shot. I swear to myself that we're going to get Rob Salzer to the second shoot if we have to part the Red Sea, move Heaven

school (in *my* old high school TV production class, appropriately enough). This new collaboration between ourselves will be like "Auld Lang Syne," in a manner of speaking.

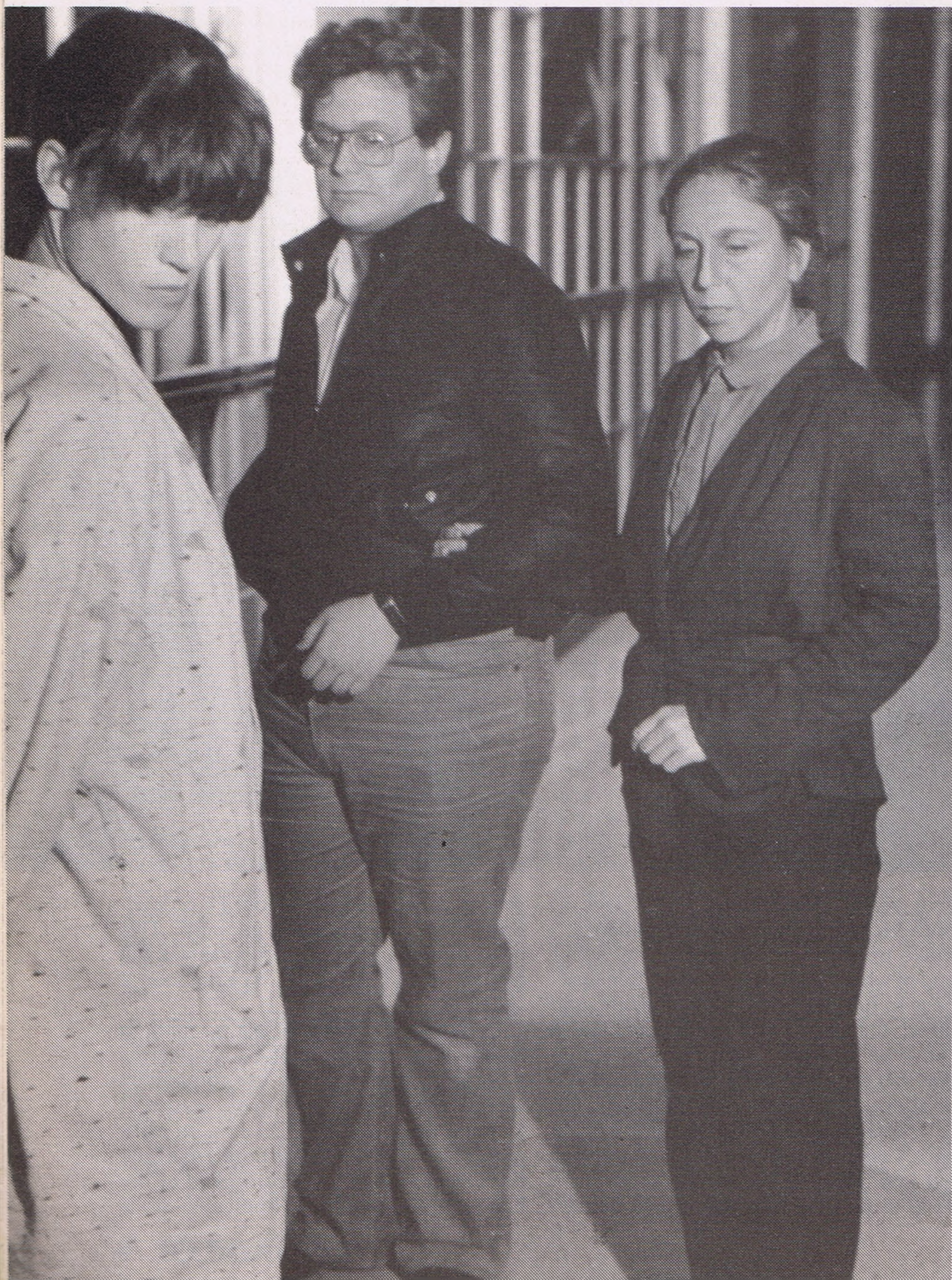
**February 1, 1986.** At last, something resembling a *real* shoot. We got ourselves a Saturday afternoon, so the complaints we heard the first time from our actors, of keeping them up till 12:30 a.m. on work nights, won't be heard this time. I'm a little bit further along in my command of the half-inch equipment... ironically, since





For a Dark Corridor shot in "The Perfect Robot Baby," the scene is one of perfectly controlled chaos. Eric Tolle, Andrew Tuttle, Leah Battle (back to the camera) and Lynelle Paulick, are following Gilmartin's directions, who is setting up the shot by watching the video monitor off-camera.

Battle, Tuttle and Paulick in the corridors of Santa Barbara City College.



Rob Salzer has joined us, I don't need to operate the camera myself.

Unfortunately, it turns out that I do. The access studio has given the much-needed video lights we would have used to the Grey Panthers video shoot, which has refused to bring them back in time for our shoot. A direct violation of the studio's rules, and a damn inconvenience to our shoot!! Fortunately, Eric Tolle's living room has wide undraped windows, and we're getting sufficient sunlight to light the scene. We also don't have a tripod, which rates at least a double Aaaargh!! Rob and I trade off framing shots with the camera resting on tabletops; in one crucial shot, I sit on the ground and gently balance the camera on my kneecaps (a painful proposition).

Scene 29, a climactic moment in the lives of our characters, and two pages from my script, is on the production schedule today. Rob has to double as makeup artist today in order to make Andrew and Lynelle look eighteen years older than they do in the first shoot's footage; whilst Leah, the professional model, applies her own makeup in order to achieve the fresh-faced look of a teenaged Jessica. In this scene, Jessica confronts her weary parents for the final time, by threatening to avoid college in favor of a life in New York as (heaven forbid) an actress. Perhaps Isaac Asimov's three laws of robotics should be amended to read, "...unless they're your adoptive parents."

An interesting point: Andrew and Lynelle, the classically trained stage actors, find the start-and-stop process of video production quite disruptive to their theatrical training. Leah, on the other hand, a neophyte with no stage training, adapts quite readily to the process. Well, making commercials no doubt prepared her for this event. Nevertheless, she manages to blow a few lines, and Andrew and Lynelle are still quite brilliant as their older selves. Rob's makeup work, very hard to spot for what it is, consists only of some grey in the hair and a bit of "war paint" to add lines to their faces. For his part, Eric Tolle starts out simply as our location manager and quickly adds property master to his credentials, giving us odd sorts of drinking cups, pens, and futuristic-looking bits of clothing for our characters to wear. Seems like you've got to be part octopus, have eight arms and hands, to get anything done in the fast-paced world of film and TV production.

**March 1.** During a lull in the First Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival here in town, Robert Levin and I meet to discuss *Beyond Tomorrow*. He hands me a copy of a short story, "The Last Cocktail Party," which was written by a mutual friend, Phyllis Hide. It concerns a nervous guest at a party that, who unbeknownst to him, takes place in the great beyond of the Afterlife. It's a very witty story, very tongue-in-cheek in sort of



a Monty Python way, considering its gruesome subject matter: death. Robert Levin wishes for me to adapt this story into a teleplay which he plans to direct as the second *Beyond Tomorrow* episode. But, we're getting ahead of ourselves here. Back to the *first* episode.

**March 11.** Our third shoot, and once again, a nighttime affair. This time, fortunately, we have all the lighting gear in addition to the camera (they did, also, give us a tripod, too!). Rob Salzer only needs to apply base makeup again, since scenes 8, 9, and 10 require Andrew and Lynelle to be their youthful married selves. I'm quivery with excitement tonight; this sequence is an original scene which I wrote, which can't be found in my mother's story.

The scene works smoothly, at first: Andrew and Lynelle have two-and-a-half pages of dialogue, a continuous scene, to do. I simply shoot one long closeup of each actor through the entire scene. It's when I must have them in a two shot, seated on the Tolle family couch, that Andrew flubs a line to Lynelle's howls of laughter. While the camera is still running, I throw a script at them; Andrew learns his lines; and then I adjust the script so that it lies open to the required page, displayed just out of camera frame on a facing coffee table. Great blooper reel material. The highlight of tonight's shooting: a beautiful executed pan shot, performed by Rob Salzer, of Andrew moving from one room to another, sitting down, and facing opposite of Lynelle, to whom Rob then pans (all in one unbroken shot). We are definitely improving with time and practice.

**March 18.** Robert Levin is pretty juiced about the "Cocktail Party" script I gave him back on March 11. He plans to advertise for actors at the various colleges and in the local newspapers; a wise move, methinks.

Our fourth shoot, third at Eric Tolle's house, is also set at night. Lynelle is beginning to sound like a broken record; always griping about how long these nighttime shoots last, how they always keep her up till the wee hours of the morning when she has to be at work the next day. To our credit, however, we are working much faster and much harder by now than at any previous time. Robert isn't here to see how good we've been getting; he's out of town.

Tonight we have scenes 24 and 27. In the former, Leah Battle plays Jessica at fourteen, trying to sneak into the house without her parents discovering her late return. Naturally, they have waited up for her; it's a brief but tense exchange. Leah breezes easily through it and goes home. Then in the latter scene, after they've been made up to look still older, Andrew and Lynelle reminisce about their years with Jessica. We get it in one take! Nothing like watching professionals working at their craft. Except, of course, for *being* one.

**April 8.** Shooting video or film in somebody's home can be hazardous



Clutching his script, Andrew Tuttle reminds us that he's the star on this episode. In the background, producer/series creator Robert Levin chats with makeup artist Terry Edwards.

enough. Shooting in a public location, such as Santa Barbara City College, where we happen to be tonight, is even worse. Imagine all of the students getting out of classes, making jokes about "accidentally" tripping on our cables so that they can sue us, and all of the noise from their conversations while we're trying to tape scenes.

Yup. It happened to us in spades tonight.

Actually, that wasn't so bad. We shot scenes 36, 37, and 38, the final three scenes in the script. Andrew and Lynelle, made up as old fogeys, confronts Jessica, now eighteen, in the college hallway and, as you might expect, decide to keep her and live happily (if bumpily) ever after, as per the ending to my mother's story. After we finish this, we shoot some silent footage of just the dark, somewhat spooky hallway with the running overhead lights for use in scene 2 over which we're going to lay down the Narrator's first speech of this episode.

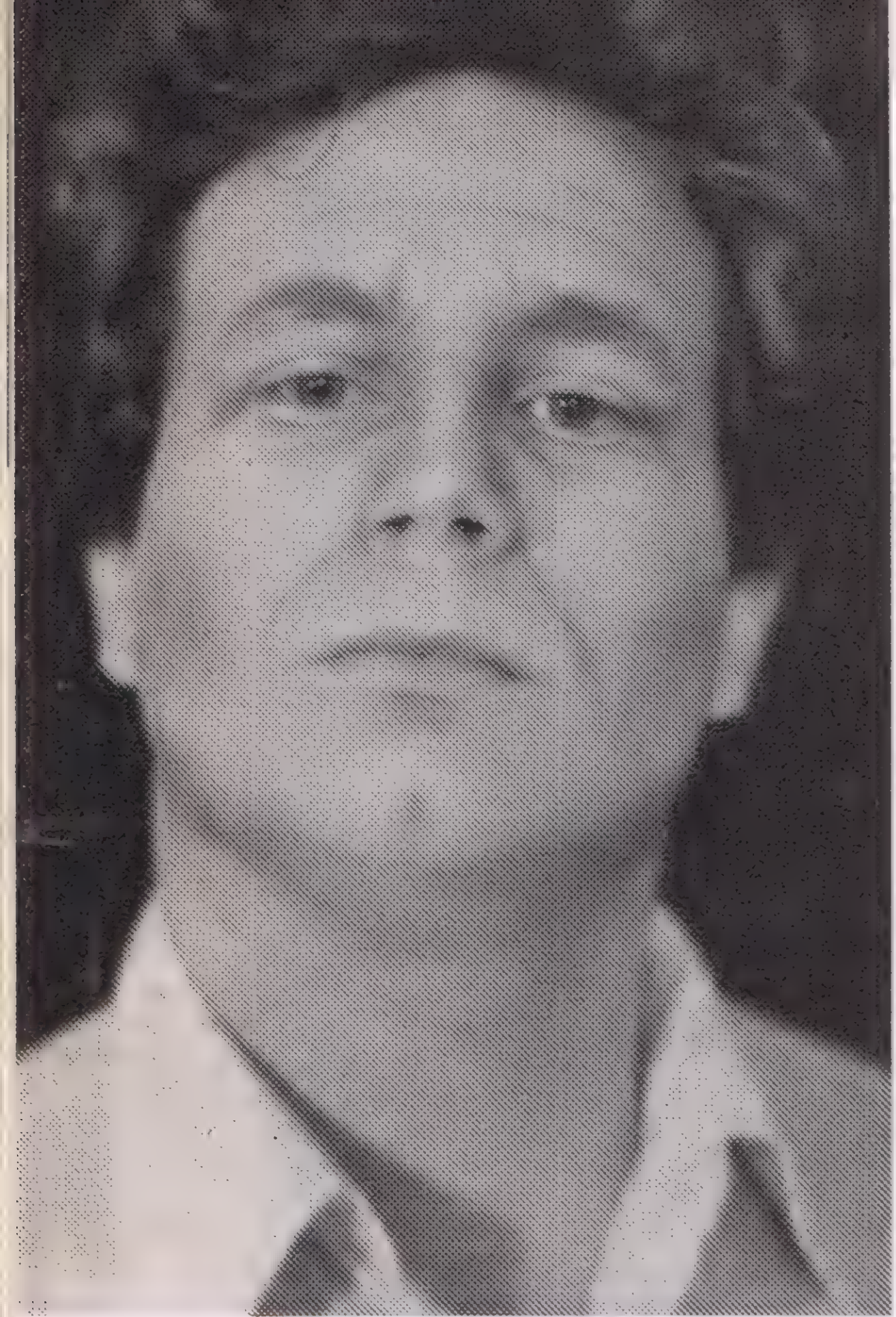
I just love professionalism. Leah Battle,

very sick and needed across town at 9 p.m. for a \$300 modeling shoot, decides at nine—just when we're ready to do her first scene—to stick with us, her friends, to finish up her commitment to our show. She does, in fact, complete her scenes with us this evening and signs her model's release this same night.

The one disquieting moment of trouble we do have with the campus facility is still recorded on my master cassette tape: Leah is framed up in the camera, waiting for her cue to begin her scene. It's at least five minutes before I'm able to call, "Action," however. Off screen, down the hallway a bit, Eric Tolle is attempting to pacify an irate teacher, who blusters all sorts of threats at our production members for no reason. It almost comes to blows before the guy has another class to teach, or something of that nature. Being told by a college employee to pack up and leave two hours into a hard physical job like setting up the camera gear is surely no fun.

On the other hand, we might be scoring





Andrew Tuttle, age 23, is aged by makeup artist Robert Salzer for his role as the father in "The Perfect Robot Baby."

points in other quarters. Rob Salzer has recruited a makeup artist, Terry Edwards, to relieve him of the responsibility for that element of our show. She remarks, with some degree of amazement, on just how seriously I and my crew take this show. "It's just like a regular Hollywood production," she's heard to say. But, of course, how else does one work his way up to *doing* a "regular Hollywood production?"

Finally, we pack up and leave City College. It's been an interesting experience, but slightly traumatic, too. I miss the element of control I had at Eric Tolle's house. Fortunately our next shoot takes us back there.

**April 22.** Tonight marks our sixth shoot. And first to present us with continuity problems. Andrew is here, ready to work, but Lynelle couldn't make it. Something about being busy on Tuesday nights (which this is) for the indefinite future. As long as I have Robert and Rob and Andrew and Eric and Terry gathered here tonight, though, I'm going to shoot.

We decide to do Andrew's closeups in scenes 12 through 15, a connected sequence of scenes in which the Hardings discuss the latest amount of domestic havoc wrought by baby Jessica. This is an important sequence, since it culminates in Mr. Harding's decision, near the end of act one, to take Jessica back to the Perfect Robot Baby Company for "repairs."

Andrew is the most *professional* amateur actor I've ever known! He takes the news

that he'll be acting to thin air tonight in stride and gets down to business with no fuss. To help him, I suggest that he think of Lynelle as an optical effect that will be added by Industrial Light and Magic later on; he laughs, which I take as a good sign.

Tonight we have a surprise bit of fun: a scene between Andrew and Eric Tolle. Eric is fully made up by Terry to portray a middle-aged guest at a party to whom Andrew is bragging about Jessica in scene 25. We get it in two takes; I have to tone down the overly "busy" reactions Eric gives to Andrew's speech. I can see that this is the most fun Eric has had yet on this shoot.

Working with a go-for-it group of serious-minded people like the *Beyond Tomorrow* crowd has inspired me. I am beginning to see just how hard it is to create a TV show or a motion picture, even on the amateur level. Small wonder that so many people try, fail early, and give up as so many of my friends have done. But I know that we have really achieved something here. The question, though, is: what? We won't know that until we've cut the show together. Months from now!

**April 29.** Tonight I learned just what the limits of my crew's dedication to this project are. Not to mention the limits of their (and my own) physical endurance.

Talk about a crazy business. . . . First, it turns out that Lynelle is available on Tuesday nights (the best night of the week for everybody else) after all. She still com-

plains a bit too much about wanting to go home no later than 9 p.m., which is the average time each night when we're actually ready for shooting to commence. But Robert Levin explains to her just how desperately we wish to complete her scenes tonight, so she agrees to stay "as long as it takes." What ominous and prophetic words these turn out to be!

First, we shoot Lynelle's material for scenes 12 through 15, completing those scenes. Then, we do some more material with Andrew arriving home to a house in shambles—the baby's handiwork. I tell Andrew that in one scene, as he descends down the Tolle staircase, he reminds me of Orson Welles as Charles Foster Kane. The man can blush like nobody's business!

We really have poor Terry Edwards working her fingers to the bone tonight. She has to put in a half-hour on Andrew and Lynelle each, to age them properly for the later scenes. Then, as soon as we've shot those scenes, she has to wash them up and put simple base on their faces so that we can shoot them as younger Hardings. Then back to their older selves, and back again to their younger selves. She starts sounding like Lynelle pretty soon, watching the clock with a kind of soulful desperation.

As it approaches midnight, we decide to do scene 23, in which Mrs. Harding warns Jessica down from a tree in their backyard (lest an aircar hit her. . . get it?). The scene is set in the kitchen, but Rob knows that I have to have *morning sunlight* streaming in through the window illuminating Lynelle. His solution? He hauls his heavy master light out onto the patio outside the kitchen, aims it in at Lynelle, puts an amber gel over the light, and keys the video camera into the red, or warm, zone of its temperature knob. Result? Lynelle is bathed in a warm orange glow, just like at the crack of dawn. We get this "early morning footage" at 12:30 a.m.!

Finally, we do our last scene for tonight (or for this morning, rather). Scene 26, this time in which Eric Tolle, reprising his party-guest character, reacts in a humorous way to Lynelle's very different kind of maternal bragging about Jessica. We set it up, we rehearse it, and we shoot it. On playback, it looks good, so I wrap the shoot for this time. Let's see: we shot scenes 17 through 23, plus bits of 12 through 15, plus scenes 26 and 28. All told, we did thirteen scenes tonight. Not bad, though by now I should expect as much from this crew. And as we pile into our various cars to go home, we check the time. We managed to start at 9 p.m. and finish by 3 a.m.!

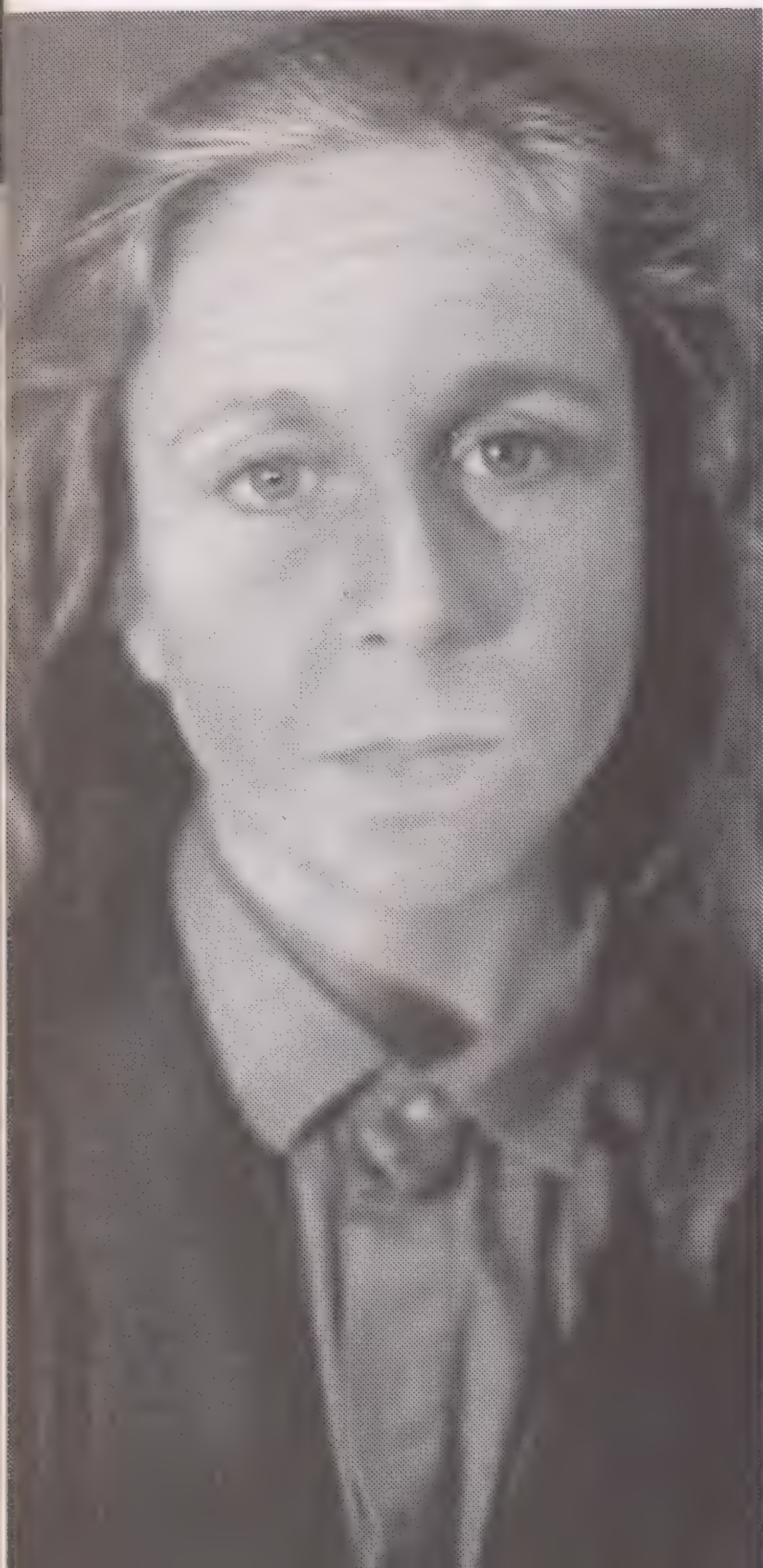
I tell Lynelle that, because of the bulk of material that we did tonight, all her remaining scenes within the Harding/Tolle house have been completed. She won't be needed next time, and can take a break. Lynelle looks like she'll be taking that break in a hospital, but she's happy.



**May 6.** A short night tonight, for a change (thank the Force). As predicted, we only have Andrew tonight as cast, but he is all I require. Terry applies Andrew's makeup and has to leave early: she has finals to study for. No problem, because we only have one scene to do tonight, scene 11. This is a very powerful, emotional scene early in the script, a scene that all the actors have called one of the best in the script. This makes me very proud, because it is another scene which I wrote from scratch and cannot be found in my mother's original story.

Scene 11 calls for Mr. Harding to call a competitor at work (Harding is an advertising man working at a futuristic broadcasting agency, one which he founded) to brag about his great success with the "ad campaign for the off-world colonies" (shades of *Blade Runner*). The topic of families comes up, and Mr. Harding gets very dreamy bragging about baby Jessica, just two years old at that point in the story. We need an office for Mr. Harding to work in, but we want something we can feel comfortable and controlled in. So we remodel Eric Tolle's bedroom, using his desk and bookshelf and a few of his spaceship designs pinned to the facing walls. One neat trick and inside joke: we put our own video monitor into the shot, just facing away from the camera, so that

Lynelle Paulick, aged into motherhood, by the skilled hands of makeup artist Robert Salzer.



Andrew will actually have a face to look at while he's doing the scene. His own! He has a unique opportunity to both act in a scene and watch it in playback *at the same time!* This might make other actors self-conscious, but those other actors aren't Andrew Tuttle. His performance in this scene is both powerful and moving, low-key but very intense and very dramatic. The joy of hearing one's dialogue rendered aloud by such a convincing and gifted actor cannot be underestimated. We tell Andrew to get his Emmy speech started right away.

We refilm an entrance scene upstairs in the living room, and break down for the night. It's a poignant moment for the "Perfect Robot Baby" crew: tonight we have finished all our scenes at the Tolle house. We thank Eric and his mother and father profusely for the opportunity to come here again and again and turn the house sideways, and *they* thank *us*, in turn, for keeping them entertained these past four months! We decide after careful examination to take this as a compliment.

**May 13.** Things were going too well, so something had to go wrong. The odds favored it too strongly. So after I picked up The Two Roberts and grab the equipment, what breaks down? *My car.* We manage to get it jump started, but it won't hold a charge—deceased battery, I'm told at the gas station. But we do manage to get to Brian Vitali's house to do that night scene.

We end up right back where we started, in the Vitali law office. Terry makes Andrew and Lynelle up to look slightly older than they did in the December 10 scenes (but then, after five months, wouldn't they normally be slightly older?). We shoot scene 16, in which the "Manager" refutes Mr. Harding's claim that Jessica, aged two, is malfunctioning. They leave the office in a huff. Fade out; end of act one.

Lynelle and Terry both want to quit early tonight, but I want to get done with this location tonight. So for scenes 30 through 35, in which the now-much-older Hardings want to exercise the warranty on Jessica, now aged eighteen ("No daughter of mine is going to become an *actress!*"), I have to promise them both that we'll quit at a reasonable hour tonight. So I decide to just wing it, see what we can accomplish in one shoot. Result: we finish all six scenes. In two takes. And we are therefore finished with this location, too!

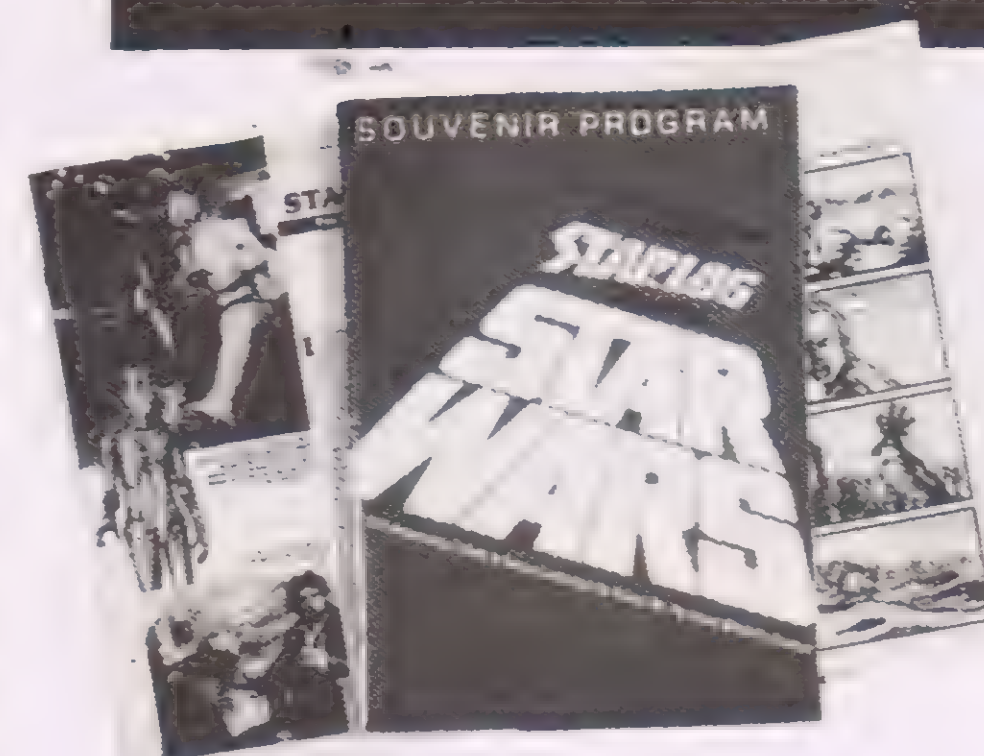
We finish up around midnight and strike the set. I tell Terry that she won't be needed any longer, and a strange yet consistent thing happens. Now that she's gotten her freedom from our production, which has drained her energy and taken her time away from her studies, *she doesn't want to leave.* It proves what Robert Levin has been saying: that what we have here really works.

**May 20.** Hard to believe, after nearly six months, but tonight is the *last* night of production with our principal actors on

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Eric Tottle sports his bruised features created by makeup artist Salzer for "The Last Cocktail Party."

"Perfect Robot Baby." We want to use the white brick wall and large upstairs glass window on the second floor of the TV studio to shoot scene 3, the scene which introduces the Hardings and this episode. We manage to chase some folk musicians out of the area and set up a single camera.

I still have a non-functioning car, so Lynelle was good enough to pick up The Two Roberts and myself. Since this is our last evening together, it's a funny, and sad, occasion. Andrew and Lynelle run through the scene beautifully it's like watching the umpteenth performance of a

play in which the cast has put several months of work. They put on their own makeup and away we go. By 8:30 p.m. we strike, and by 9:00 p.m. Lynelle is able to give me a ride home. This is the earliest I've ever gotten home from a *Beyond Tomorrow* shoot, and I'm both relieved and depressed. Relieved because we've finished principal photography on the episode. Depressed, because what am I going to do with the rest of the night?

**May-June.** I show up regularly on Thursday and Friday nights at Robert Levin's house to read with prospective actors for "The Last Cocktail Party." At my suggestion, Eric Tolle tries out for a major speaking role, and he gets the part!

**June 14.** Since I've been having no luck editing at the TV studio, I've had to go elsewhere. Kenny Dase, a film and video student at Brooks Photography Institute here, offers to help me edit. A more natural choice couldn't have been made. This kid was born to edit movies, and with any luck that's what he's doing for a career in years to come.


**Late June.** Robert Levin has put together a fine ensemble of actors for "The Last Cocktail Party." They are Larry Westdahl, Reece Brink, Eric Tolle, Leslie Gangl, Morgan Rudolph, Ray Wallenthin, and Mandy O'Hanlon. This is a funny script, and these seven actors are the most hilarious group of zanies gathered in one room since Monty Python, at least.

**June 28.** Our first shoot on "Cocktail Party," at our friend Mariellen Wathne's home. We're doing just pickup and insert

scenes today, and Robert, Rob and I even manage to squeeze in guest appearances all made up as ghouls. I've decided what this story really is: it's *Night of the Living Dead* as if it were written by Noel Coward.

**July 5-6.** Now this is what a genuine Hollywood production *really* looks like. Robert has everybody turning up the morning after the Fourth of July at 8 a.m. He's got what looks to be *five* makeup artists, a healthy-sized crew of six or seven, and a house of at least twenty extras, plus our seven lead actors. We work all day long. After our other camera people leave, Rob and I trade off. Rob's lighting scaffold performs visual wonders on a nickel-and-dime budget this weekend. As burnt out as Robert and I are that Saturday night, we take Eric Tolle with us to see *Big Trouble in Little China*. We enjoy that picture so much that it revs us up for tomorrow's shoot.

Sunday—tomorrow, the 6th—comes. With it, we start to taper off our needs for this actor or that actor. We finish with Eric and Larry Westdahl, and find that we have a couple of extras still hanging around the house. All weekend, we find that people are reluctant to leave; they're having such a good time that they want to stay. One extra, a girl named Wendy Girard, impresses us so much that we decide to cast her in our first student film, coming soon. But what really sticks in my mind, is how one extra, a "cowboy" named Dave Osborne, pumps my hand eagerly as he's going out the front door at the end of the shoot.

"You're going to make it," he tells me. "I know," I reply, "but thank you." It might sound a bit smug, Dear Diary, but I know he's right. We *are* going to make it. 

The Woman (Leslie Gangl), a femme fatale, tempts Martin Petty (Larry Westdahl) to join in the festivities at "The Last Cocktail Party."





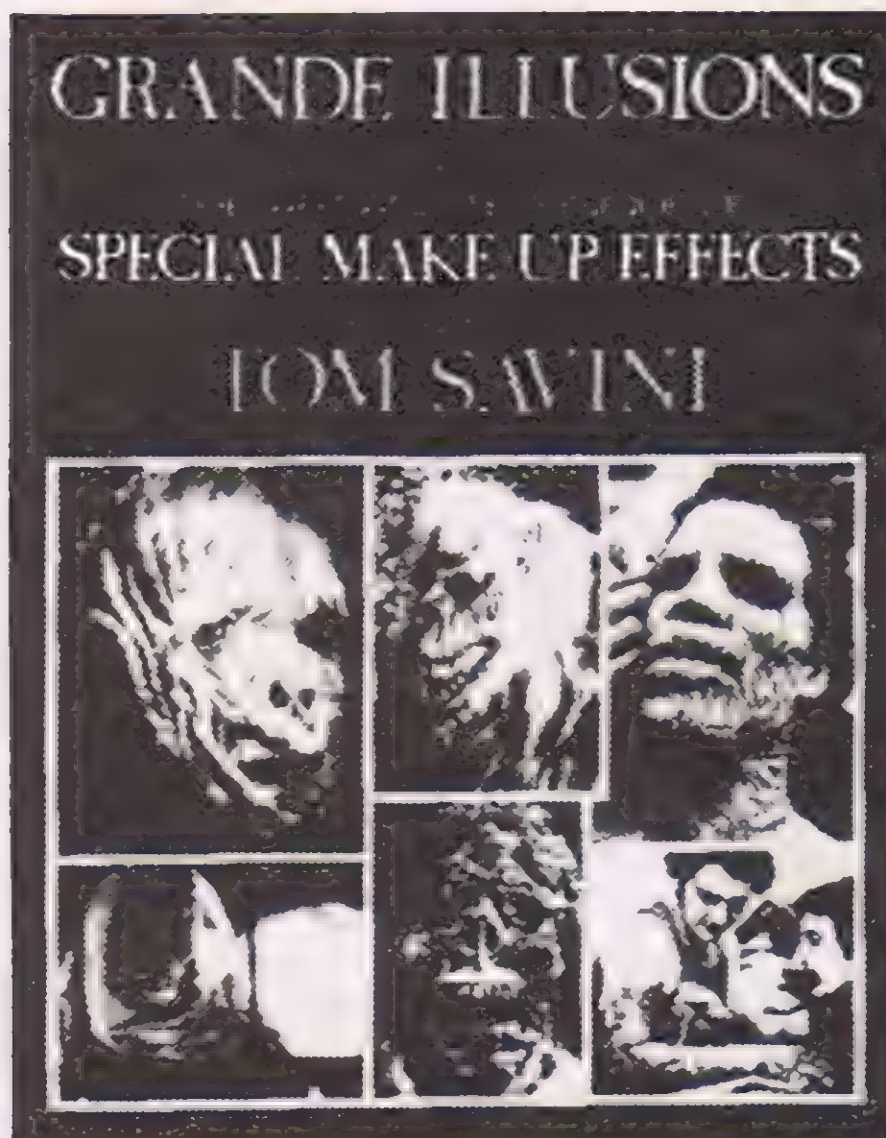
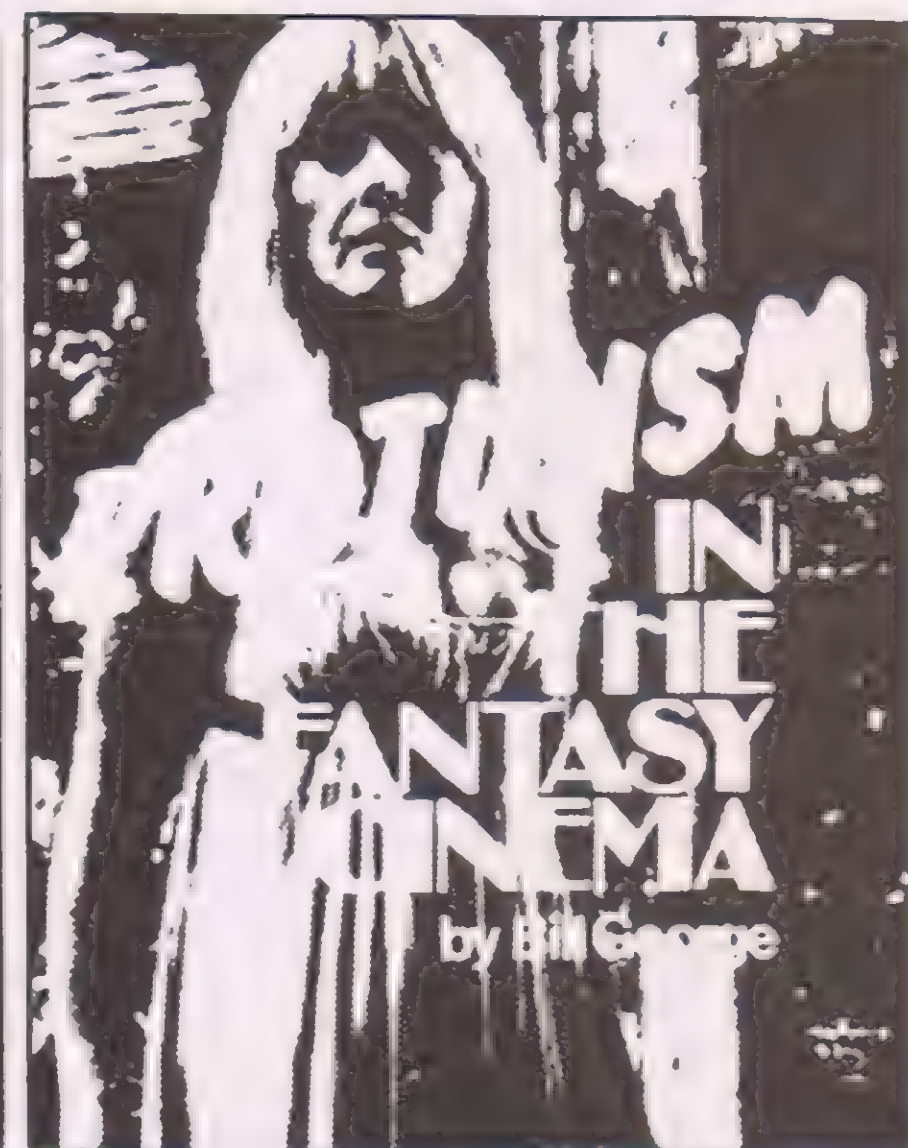
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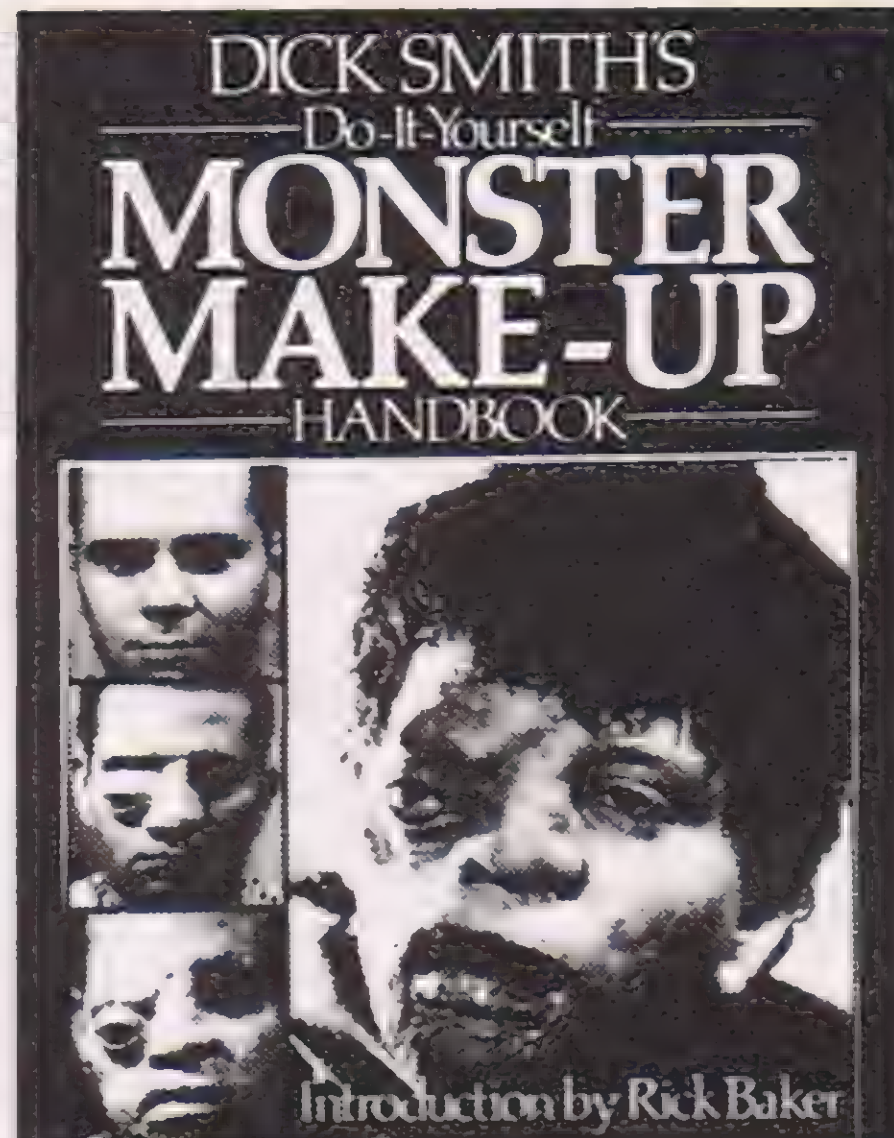
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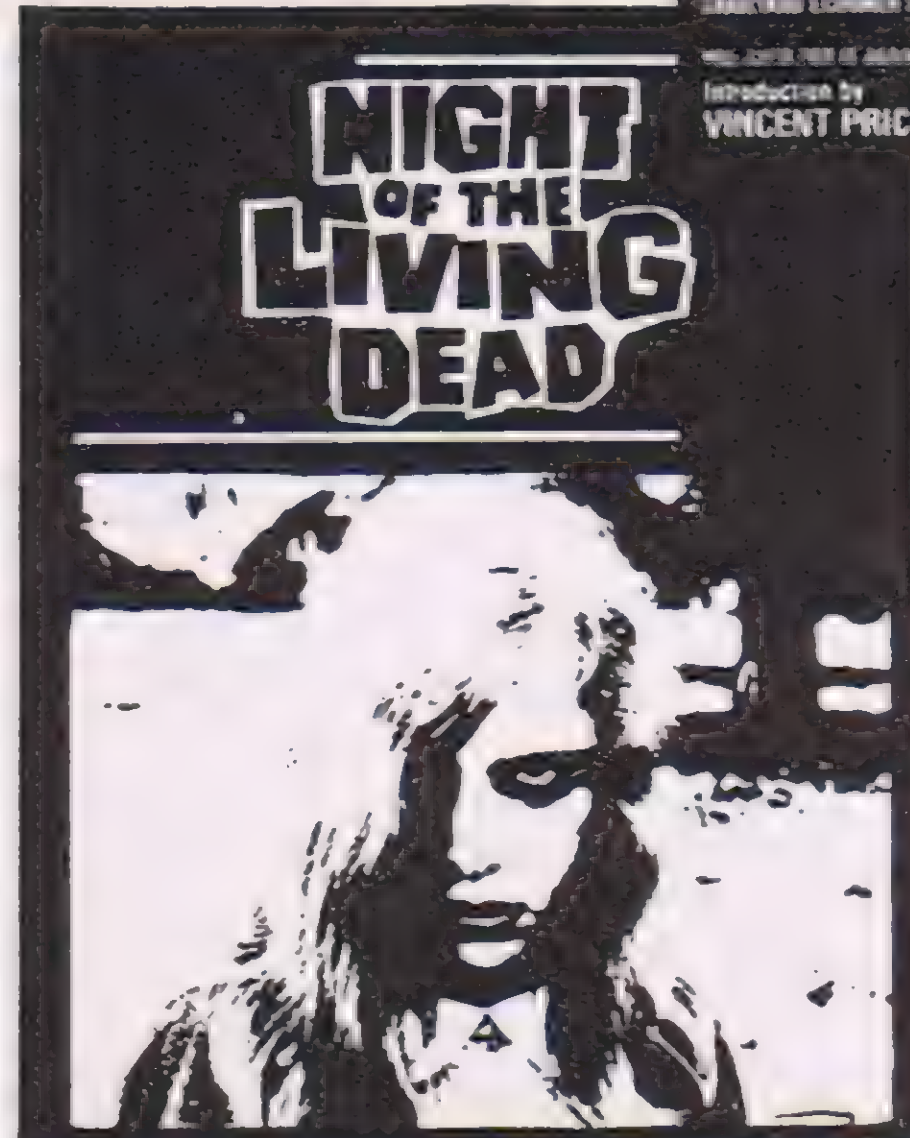
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# Creating Realistic Miniature Sets

By BILL WEBER



## Terrain and Ground Cover

**F**inding cheap but effective materials to use on miniature sets isn't always easy. More often than not, I stumble upon unique materials by accident. Fortunately, I'm always on the lookout.

In the last issue, I discussed setting up your tabletop in a way that would enable you to create depth and perspective. The materials needed for the following steps in the construction of the miniature terrain, I'm happy to say, cost very little.



Simple household materials are all that is necessary to build a tabletop version of the great outdoors.

To make rolling hills and valleys, or just subtle bumps and pockets, you'll need old newspapers, masking tape, and a papier mache mixture. Begin by crumpling sheets of newspaper fairly tightly into any sized shape and place them on the tabletop wherever you want hills or bumps. Then, simply tape them down. Next, make the papier mache by adding two portions of water to every one of flour. Start with a half cup of flour because you'll find a small portion goes a long way.

Take more newspaper and tear two inch wide strips at whatever length is comfortable to work with. Dunk the strips into the mixture and, after wiping off the excess, gently place them over the crumpled

paper on your tabletop. Once you completely cover the tabletop, you'll begin to see the terrain take shape. I suggest that you apply several layers of papier mache in order for it to dry solid. You won't want it to sag anywhere as you place down props and things later on. When the papier mache is completely dried, you'll be ready to add a layer of fake soil.

I found the best and cheapest way to make soil for sets is to use the old standby, sawdust. If you can get your hands onto free sawdust, you'll have a lifetime supply of fake soil for miniature sets. Any lumber yard or carpentry shop will be happy to get rid of the tons of sawdust they produce each week. You only need to offer your cleaning services and sweep up all the sawdust you can.

To apply the layer of 'soil' use watered down white glue. (Elmer's is fine) But don't water it down too much. Brush on a thin layer of glue wherever you want exposed earth and sprinkle on the sawdust. Let this dry, then blow off the excess. Now you'll need some acrylic paint.

Acrylic paints come in 16 oz. jars and, depending on what brand you buy and where you buy it, will cost around four dollars. At any rate, buy the cheapest you can. Some of the best colors to use are burnt umber, burnt sienna, black, and

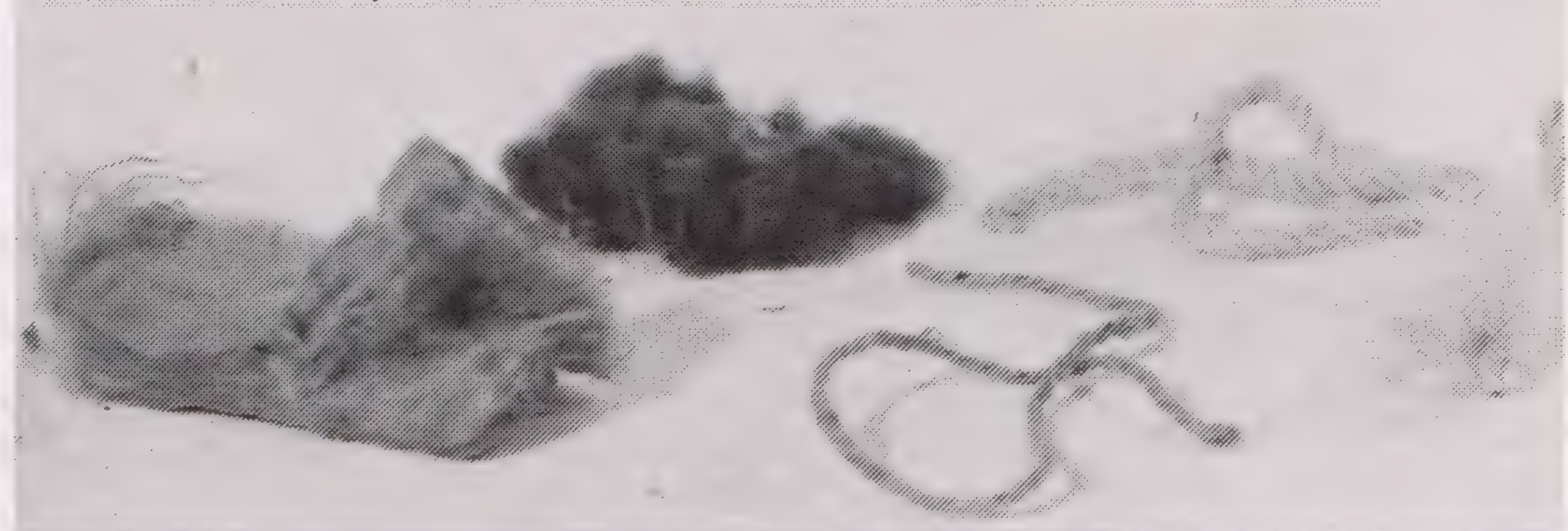
white. If you mix these colors with a dab of black or white for varying shades, you'll create some realistic earthy colors.

Once you have the color(s) you like, paint the *entire* tabletop. The areas with the sawdust will look like real soil. The areas without the sawdust are now ready for ground cover. Although these areas will be covered with grasses and other vegetation it is important to paint the entire set with your earth colors. If you don't, you may find the white newspaper areas bleeding through the miniature grass and destroying the effect.

I have found two very easy ways to make inexpensive miniature grasses. One way is to use a fiber material called Hair & Jute. It's normally used as a mat underneath carpeting, and comes in varying thicknesses. If you can find some used Hair & Jute that is being thrown out, the material will be easier to work with. It is more difficult to pull apart and to color if purchased new. So search around for houses and buildings that are being renovated or moved out of. Most likely you can scavenge large amounts of this wonderful stuff.

With the Hair & Jute, cut any size piece you like and pull it apart. The center is what you're after. On it's own, it looks just like dead grass. If you want it green, you

Fiber materials such as jute, sisal and twine can be used to create inexpensive miniature grasses.





can either spray paint it or, more effectively, dye it. I use RIT dyes that come in small boxes for one dollar and will dye up to one lb. dry weight. It also comes in liquid form for about two dollars and dyes twice as much material. Either way, it's inexpensive and very easy to use.

There are several colors of green dye to choose from. I find Kelly Green works best. The box shows this color as being very light, but the Hair & Jute comes out darker because it isn't white to begin with. The shades of green can also be varied depending on how long the material is dyed. It really makes a nice effect if a variety of subtle shades is placed together on the set because real grasses are never one solid color.

I also add a few patches of the 'dead' looking Hair & Jute just the way it comes. With all these subtle varieties in your terrain, you will achieve a very life-like effect.

The second method for creating tufts of grass is to use sisal rope or twine. This twine can be purchased in any hardware store and costs around two dollars for seventy-five yards. One roll of this will be more than enough to cover a large area.

I find it easiest to cover most of the set with the Hair & Jute first and then add the sisal twine grass in the bare 'soiled' areas.

You can color the twine using the same methods as mentioned earlier or use it as is. To make the grass tufts, cut the twine into short lengths, a bit longer than you want it to be on set. Dip one end about one quarter inch into some white glue. Let this dry on its own, but be sure it doesn't dry stuck to anything, such as a table or your work area. A travel clothes-line kit and small clothespins is a handy and inexpensive device that can be used to hang up the short pieces of twine until they dry. After the glue dries, spread apart the opposite end of the twine and you'll have a tuft of grass. When you decide where to place the grass, punch a hole into the set and carefully push the hardened end of the twine into it, once again gluing this in

Dried weeds, lichens and other ornamental pieces can be trimmed into miniature shrubs.



place. You can add as much sisal grass as is needed.

There are many ways to make other types of ground cover. Bushes can be created using lichens, which every train hobby store carries. If you want to save money, lichens are readily available free from mother nature. Spring and summer are the best times of the year to look for them; they can be found against tree trunks or in moist areas around ponds and lakes where they are usually attached to rocks and boulders.

Lichens are fine for the creation of bushes, however, on their own, they are not very convincing close up. What I do is modify them by cutting them into unusual shapes and different sizes for better scale. I then add some variously colored foam foliage bits. Foam foliage is one of the few items I do purchase from hobby stores. A wide variety of natural looking greens and browns make the foam foliage a worthwhile investment. A package of foliage costs around two dollars and can make quite a few bushes depending on how large they are.

Very large bushes can be created by using a number of dried weeds. Again, experimentation is the best way of finding new and cheap ways of creating these things.

Autumn is the best time of year to find weeds that can be used for miniatures. Florist shops are loaded during this time

of year with dried flowers and weeds. Often, these have also been treated and dyed, thus making it easier to use them. You'll find quite a few types can be used as they are or can be converted and modified into other things as well, such as trees. They can be a bit expensive, however, so if you're watching your budget, your best bet is to identify the weed first, then explore your neighborhood recreational parks and even alongside some suburban roads. You'll be surprised how readily available many of these weeds are. Some may even be in your own backyard. All you have to do is look.

Once I've chosen a particular weed to work with in making bushes, I find using popsicle sticks as a base makes it much easier to place the bushes onto the set.

First, paint a section of popsicle stick the same color as the miniature bush. Then, drill a few holes through it and begin gluing the weed into place.

The more holes you fit into a stick, the denser the bush. Once the glue dries, snip off the excess weed on the underside of the popsicle stick. Now you're ready to *lightly* glue the bush anywhere on the set.

The reason I do it this way instead of gluing the weed directly into the tabletop, is that not only do you have more control over creating the shape of the bush but, also, when you're finished with that particular set, you can salvage the bushes intact by gently prying them loose with a screwdriver. Now they'll be ready to use for the next set-up.

Rocks are also a very important element in the creation of a miniature landscape. But take the time to create your own, which will not only be lighter in weight but more consistent in color and design. Real stones on a miniature set often look out of place because the scale is wrong and the subtle details of color and shape may be missing.

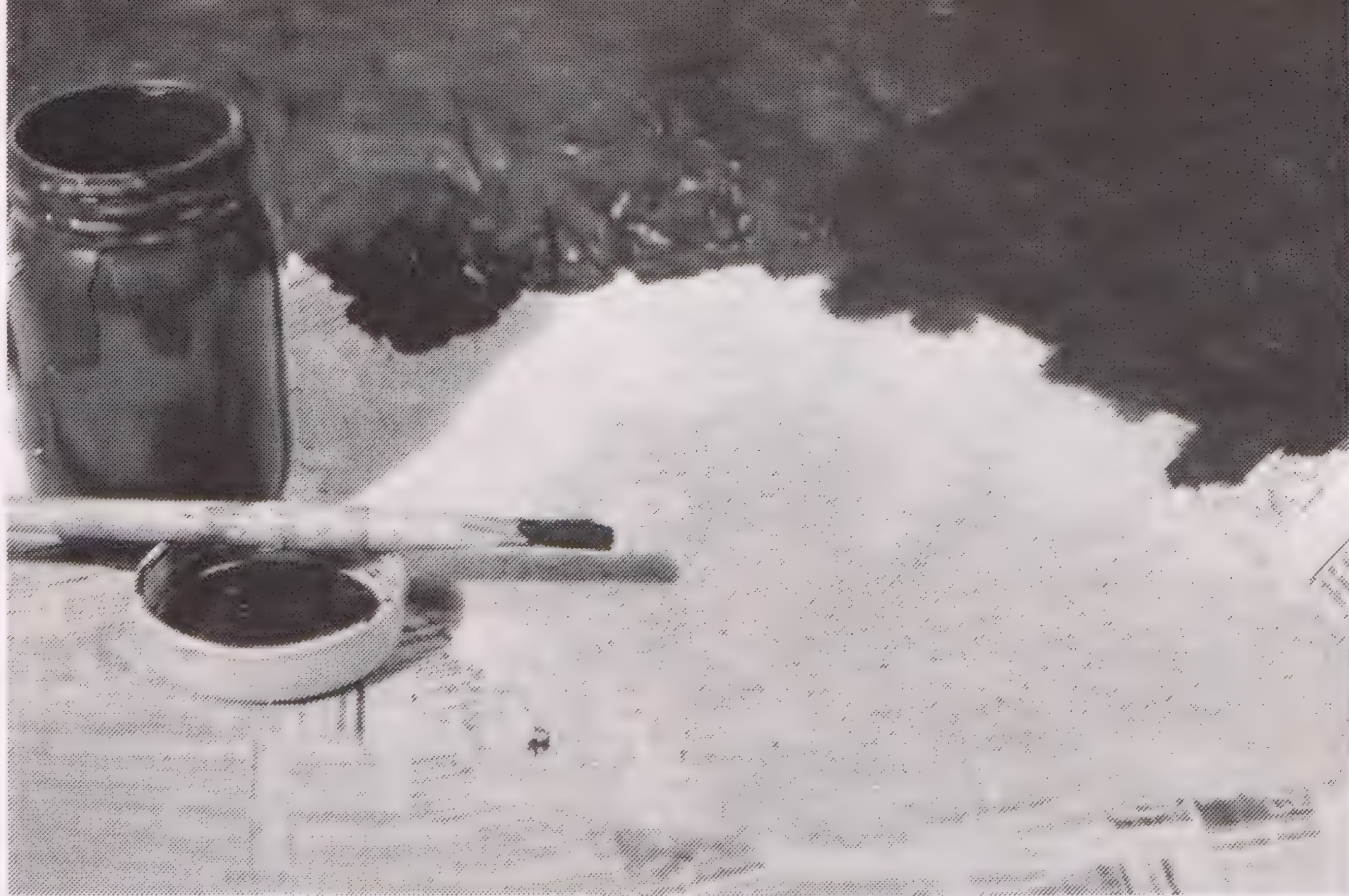
Plaster of Paris is a great material for making rocks. This can be purchased in 4 lb. quantities for around two dollars, which is plenty for large amounts of rock.

You should mix the plaster in an old plastic bowl—one that is no longer needed. Disposable plastic food containers are



Miniature rolling hills and valleys can be created from crumbling newspaper, masking tape and a paper mache mixture.





Sawdust is the best and cheapest way to create a realistic soil texture on your miniature set. The sawdust is sprinkled over a layer of diluted white glue; acrylic paint is used as a first coat after the sawdust dries.

ideal. The bowl should also be flexible so that it allows easy cleaning once the excess plaster has dried. In this way you'll be able to squeeze the bowl and crack off the plaster inside, leaving it clean and ready for another batch.

After the plaster is thoroughly mixed and begins to harden a little, scoop the plaster out and shape into a large chunk. Then let it dry completely. Now take a hammer to it and smash it into smaller bits, or whatever size rock you desire. **BE SURE TO WEAR PROTECTIVE GOGGLES** and to do the smashing in an area covered with a drop cloth or newspapers. This procedure is fun but makes one big mess and plaster pieces do fly through the air.

As you break apart the plaster you'll get miniature rocks of every size and shape. Collect the ones you like, clean up the rest, and break out the acrylic paints once again.

To paint the plaster rocks, begin with a light base color. Light gray, tan, or brown is fine. Then, using a sponge instead of a

brush, stipple additional colors over the base color. Experiment with these colors and once you have a color scheme that works, stick to it with all of your rocks. You want to keep them consistent in coloration. And that's all there is to it!

I want to stress the fact that color plays a very important part in the creation of realism for miniatures. The more subtle varieties in color you add to a set, the better it will look. Don't use harsh primary colors such as bright greens, reds, or yellows. Even plain flat browns and blacks don't look natural. Mix your colors for whatever miniature prop with the same subtleties you'll find outdoors for absolute realism.

These are just a few ideas for the creation of highly detailed miniature sets. There are infinite ways of achieving the effect. All it takes is imagination and a lookout for unusual materials that can be converted into almost anything in miniature. The important thing is to have fun with it.

CM



Bits of broken plaster chunks are added to suggest rocks and rough terrain; color is stippled onto the plaster chunks.

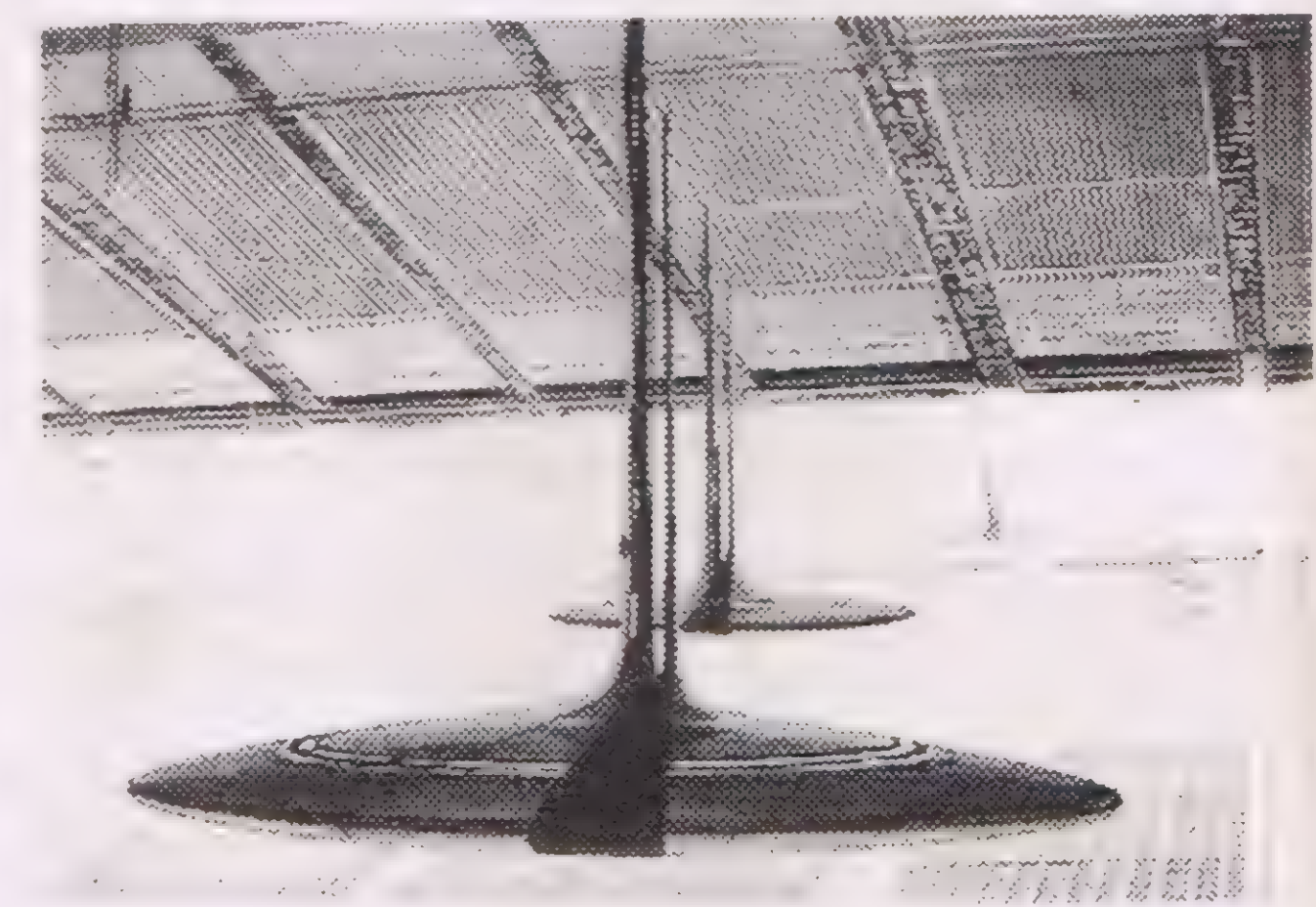


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# BULLETIN BOARD



Please forward announcements of film projects in current production or near completion to Producers' Bulletin Board, c/o CINEMAGIC, 475 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. Please include a photograph of some phase of the production if possible.

**Helping Hand.** Up into the wee hours of the night studying for exams, an exhausted student falls asleep, only to have his nightmares materialize in the form of a small tentacled demon. The boy's right hand detaches itself from his sleeping body to defend him from the monster and a battle to the death begins atop his desk. Live action, Claymation super-8 silent color, running time aprox. 3 minutes. Written, animated, directed by Kevin J. Lindenmuth, Brimstone Productions, 36038 Crompton Circle Farmington Hills, MI 48018.)

**Caged Moon.** "There's something strange about that girl Dr. Motz is examining." Iris Productions Presents: A clay animated film by Ken Stipe and Joerg Fiederer. Director of Photography: Ken Stipe, Animator: Joerg Fiederer 16mm color, sound. Running time: Approx 10 mins. (In post production). (Iris Productions, C/O Joerg Fiederer, 1820 N. Edgemont Apt. #3, Los Angeles CA 90027.)



**Vengeance Mine.** Revenge is the name of the game. His family victims of violent crime, he chooses to take the law into his own hands and seek out the gang of hoodlums one by one . . . but soon finds himself the one who is hunted. Producer/Director/Writer/Star: Dan O'Connor. Cast: Jeff Thoreson, Howard Hamilton, Mark Galaska, Donavon Robbins. Super-8, color, sync sound. Video release. Running time: 50 minutes. (Zap Productions, Inc., c/o Dan O'Connor Film Works, 610 South 35th St., Omaha, NE 68105.)



**The Zombie Legions.** The Doctor arrives on a nearly deserted planet where he meets a marooned human and an alien. The trio flee the planet when it is invaded by the Sontaran hordes. They escape to Earth in the 22nd century where they uncover a plot to enslave the entire planet. Producer: Rick Hallock; Director: Kevin Standlee; Writer: Perry Lake. Cast: Kevin Standlee, Erlinda Siller, Merri Suver with Thomas Talley, Rudy Minger, Perry Lake, Rick Hallock, Laura Gosh. Video. Shot on location in Red Bluff and Chico, CA. (Film Classics & Co., 1440 Garryana Drive, Red Bluff, CA 96080.)







**Pagliacci.** On the night of his grand performance, a man sober-mindedly contemplates serious matters of life, death, and theatre, while he prepares himself for the show. To the haunting music of Leoncavallo, our hero puts on his make-up and dresses in his operatic clown costume. When he is quite finished and ready, he confidently admires himself in a mirror and then heads for the stage. In his performance he pours his heart into his character; he completely flops, the stage lights are cut off, and the clown is humiliated off the stage. So much for his debut. Devastated, the poor man returns to his dressing room and collapses on a chair before his mirror. Spotting a razor blade, he toys with the idea of ending it all now, or to go on living and striving for recognition. Predictable ending. By James Joseph Gregorio and Russell James Murray Whiting of *Actors Cinema*. Production crew: Anne Reccer, Chris Todd and William Maxwell Wood. Special Effects included photographing the Arts Club of Washington DC's 15 ft recital hall stage to resemble the Metropolitan Opera House. Running time: 8 minutes; Super-8 color/sound. (Russell J.M. Whiting 6817-99th Avenue, Seabrook, MD 20706.)

**Redneck Zombies.** "The South has risen again . . . from the dead!" A graphic horror/comedy in the tradition of *Motel Hell*, shot in amazing Psychedeliavision. The army loses a barrel full of Chemical Nuclear Warfare Toxic Waste. A family of redneck moonshiners find the barrel and make a still out of it, unaware that the radioactive moonshine will kill them, boil their bodies, and turn them into flesh-hungry zombies. One by one a group of obnoxious and irritating college students camping, nearby are brutally eaten, until the survivors discover how to kill the zombies. . . just in time to be surrounded by a mob of townspeople, who have all sampled the moonshine! Shock surprise ending. Writer/Producer/Director/FX: Pericles Lewnes; Writer/Producer/Editor/FX: Ed Bishop; Writer/Producer/Lighting Director/FX: George Scott. Cast: Lisa DeHaven, William-Livingston Dekker, Jim Housely, Bucky Santini, etc. Effects include: zombie transformations with bladders, eye gouge, head crush, rifle blast, graphic bites and flesh eating, body tearing in half, dissolving skin, Psychedeliavision. In post-production for Spring release. 1-inch video, sound, sound effects, original music. Running time: 90 minutes. (Full Moon Pictures, 503 Elizabeth St., Delmar, MD 21875.)



**Garden of Insanity.** A very strange man lives at the bottom of Boronia Crescent. He is a recluse, alienated from the rest of the world and involved in some very strange hobbies. His favourite pastime is growing horrifying deformities in his garden, which he tends with razor sharp implements of death. Borden and Mike, two friends, are out for a leisurely afternoon bike ride. When Borden's bike breaks, they are forced to seek help, and the only place they can find it is in the hands of the Mad Farmer Of Death! Unbeknownst to them, he plans to employ them in his hobby, using his skilled red thumb to harvest their souls! Is there any escape from the Garden of Insanity?!? Producer: Fourth Corner Film Productions. Writer/Director: Geoff McRae. Cinematographers: Steven Bobel, Brent Nicolle, Geoff McRae. Starring: Bret Nicolle, Steven Bobel, Geoff McRae. FX By Full Circle Film Magix (Div. of Fourth Corner Films) Include: Decapitation, throat-slitting, violent hoe-and-shovel stabbing and chopped hand. Film includes big fight scene and horrifying shock ending. Super-8 color, post-dubbed sound w/music, dialogue & sound FX. Running time: About 8 minutes. (Fourth Corner Film Productions, c/o Geoff McRae, 825 Boronia Crescent, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, L3Y 5J8.)





**Midnight Mass.** Horror in the classic tradition. A vampire with world domination on his mind begins his conquest by forming his own unholy congregation in a ruined cathedral. Producer/Director/Writer/Cameraman: Mark Szymanowski. Effects include: front projection, matte paintings, and assorted make-up and violence. 16mm, B/W, sound. Running time: 1 hour (Mayhem Films, c/o Mark Szymanowski, 220 E. Prairie Ronde St., Dowagiac, MI 49047.)

**Zombies from Outerspace.** A low-budget spoof of bad science-fiction films of the 1950's. Shot on a miniscule budget (under \$10,000) it attempts to capture the flavor of such classics as *Robot Monster*, *Plan Nine from Outerspace*, *Queen of Outerspace*, & *The Robot vs. the Aztec Mummy*, etc. Principal photography has been completed. Effects include: matte shots, split screens, minatures, stop-motion animation, pyrotechnics, video effects, gore appliances etc., 16mm color sound; running time: 70 minutes. Produced and directed by George Ormrod and John Sabotta, 122 E. 19th, Olympia, Washington 98501.

**Zones of Evil.** Some inept journalists try to write about horror cinema. Unfortunately, their lackluster layout and disgusting poor taste is terrifying. Surprise ending. (Nichols Films. Produced, Written and Directed by Rob Nichols. Cast: Brian Fortin, Steve Mallas, Peter Bakula and Peter Kiley. Effects include: poor layout, bad sentence structure, total destruction of the English language and unoriginality. Rob Nichols, 4804 Kilbane Lane, Dale City, VA 22193, 703-590-2083.)

**War Movie.** A soldier seeks out a small enemy outpost deep in the jungles of Vietnam, where he is to retrieve stolen documents. Camera/Director: Rob Cosentino and James Noll. Cast: Pat Knowlden, Sean Terry, Pete Godwin, Mike Reidy, Tim Reidy, Robert June, Roger Range, Matt Sozanski, and Jay Vaughn. (Miracle Movies, c/o Rob Cosentino, 982 Gilder Avenue, Elmira, NY 14903.)

**Forgotten Garden.** A no-good but upwardly mobile young entrepreneur makes a killing with his job; his dirty deeds are discovered by his live-in girl friend, who ultimately foils him . . . after he has killed her. Super-8, color, magnetic sound with original score. Running time: 5 minutes (Independent Productions, c/o Steve Bydal, 2912 Oaffe Road, Wilmington, DE 19808.)

**The Animation Police.** An organization devoted to the preservation of good animation everywhere; they fearlessly invade low-quality productions to arrest characters violating the standards of classical animation (such as *The Care Bears*). Conceived, animated, written and directed by John Mathot. 16mm, color, sound. Running time: two minutes. Film is being produced at the Rhode Island School of Design. (John Mathot, 40 Pinecrest Road, Holliston, MA 01746.)

**Trigg Solo and the Blue Dragon.** A four-chapter serial set in 1944. Complete with heroes, villains, shoot-outs, chases, brawls, and cliff-hangers. In fact, the first cliff-hanger is a cliff-hanger: our hero is struggling with a gangster on the edge of a cliff. One of them falls to his death, and you ask, "Who is it?" Tune in next week! Producer/Director/Writer: Mark Jackson. Camera: Mike Jackson. Cast: Mark Jackson, Beth Stokes, Matt Mooney, Kim Sullivan, Gabe Avenna, and Blake Balla. Effects include: miniature missile exploding in trees, ricocheting bullets, and smoke effects. Super-8, sound, black & white for authenticity. (Jackson Films, c/o Mark Jackson, 2440 Giovanni Drive, Placerville, CA 95667.)

**Gore Eaters!** A meteor crashes in a graveyard and brings the dead back to life (in the vein of *Night of the Living Dead*). Pretty soon the corpses eat out the whole town and three teens band together for survival. The heroes try to kill the zombies by smashing their brains. But does that always work?! Producer: Vince Tringali. Director/Editor: Dan Nagle. Effects include: flesh eating, a torn throat, bullet wounds, a smashed head, a decapitation, brain eating, zombies and gore. Filmed under the lowest budget possible. Cast: Dan Nagle, John Boothe, Vince Tringali. Filmed in Maryland. 8mm silent. (Megabux films, c/o Dan Nagle, 9322 Mellonbrook Road, Columbia, MD 21045.)

**Xenon Vice.** In the year 2081 on the planet of Xenon, the crime rate is so high, 14-year-old boys are able to join the police force. This is the story of Mitchell Smith, on his first mission for the Vice Squad. Smith must seek out and destroy Lubba Victors, a manufacturer of Acronon, the most powerful drug in the world; it alters the face horribly. Can Smith save the Solar System before the drug is shipped to different planets? Producer/Director/Writer: Eddie Ryer. Cameraman: David Ryer. Cast: Eddie Ryer, Andy Ryer. Running time: 6 minutes. (Trans-Film Productions, c/o Eddie Ryer, Hawthorne Hill Road, Newton, CT 06470.)

**Shadows.** An evening of fantasy role-playing turns into a nightmare as a player unwittingly activates the demon living in the garage. Director, Todd Wardrope; Writer, Todd Wardrope. Cast: Brad Alaniz, Kent Mein, Aaron McKee, Garret Purdue, Kirk Island. Effects: Todd Wardrope. Videotape, color, sound, approximate running time: 60 minutes. (Anonomous Productions, 5924 Newton Ave., S. Minneapolis, MN 55419.)

**The Beast of Myth.** A rather complicated plot revolves around mad doctor's attempt to create a monster in Central America. Writer/director/cameraman: Sundiata Cowels; Producers: Clinton J. Cowels and Sundiata Cowels. Special Makeup Effects: Random Violence, Inc. Cast: Stephen Aksman, Geeber, Didrik Hoag, Chris Morgan, Mark Usatine, Jeff Vieweg, Scott Lozea. Effects include: monster bursting through a man's stomach and the devouring of a man's intestines. Filmed in Freehold, NJ; Super-8, color, sound on tape. Running time: 8 minutes. (Cowels Group release of a Burning Dead Film, c/o Sundiata Cowels, 167 Juniper Drive, Freehold, NJ 07728.)

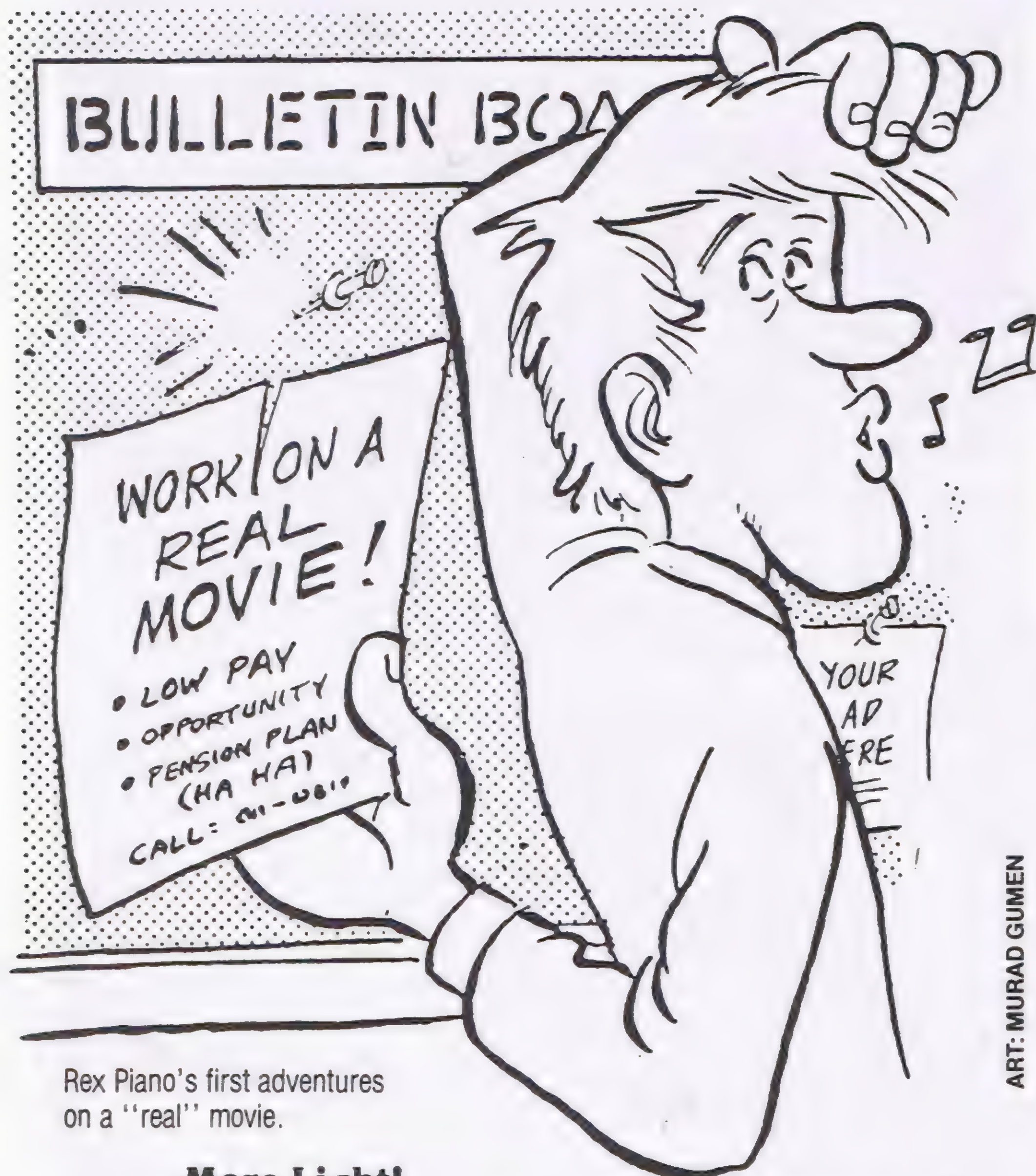
**The Tattershroud.** Spense St. Ives is a level-headed young man until he starts upon a journey into schizophrenia that takes him well beyond the gates of delirium. Story by Zachery Bauman. Conceptual horror/action/adventure. Cast: Joe Schwab, Mike Nesbit, Jeff Bloomer, Curt Muskopf, Andy Sullivan, Ken Nesbit, Heather Nesbit, John Jakob. Effects include: dream effects, hallucinations, undead effects, exploding real-estate, re-animation effects, vampire effects, machine guns, necrophilia, you name it. Video. Director: Mike Nesbit (Futureshock, Inc., 10 Lake Lorraine, Belleville, IL 62221.)





# Filmmakers' FORUM

A regular department devoted to readers' comments about filmmaking, their problems and solutions.



Rex Piano's first adventures on a "real" movie.

ART: MURAD GUMEN

## More Light!

... Your article "Adventure of a Production Assistant" and "Film and Tape: the Best of Both Worlds," both in issue #34 were two of the best articles I have ever read in CINEMAGIC. "Adventures" was very entertaining, as well as insightful for anyone who is curious as to what working on a movie set is like. Other articles in CINEMAGIC #34 that proved very informative were "Lighting Monsters," "Making Molds," "Easy Effects" (the titler), and "Stop Motion Studio."

I must agree, though, with what Dan Kellaway touched upon in his letter in issue #34. It seems that CINEMAGIC is catering more towards the stop-motion crowd and the armchair animators nowadays instead of serving up articles for filmmakers in general. I am speaking about retrospectives on Disney and Claymation features that seem to belong more in CINEMAGIC's sister publication STARLOG, in lieu of more lighting articles (having been a P.A. for a video production company, I realize how involved lighting can become, especially for a scene which is supposed to look "normal"). Certainly all genres of film require some lighting technique. How about more "On Location" ar-

ticles dealing with reader's productions, or interviews with Short Film Search winners and other up-and-coming talent?

Don't get me wrong; I feel animation is perhaps the most creative form of filmmaking, especially for low-budget filmmaking. It is not, though, the only kind of filmmaking that CINEMAGIC readers might want to learn about. As with lighting, there are endless aspects of film production that span all the genres. In addition, it's always inspiring to read about someone else working on a craft at the same level as you are. That's what CINEMAGIC is all about—a way for filmmakers to share their ideas and their thoughts about filmmaking.

P.S. An alternative to making the Kodalith negative for the titler in issue #34 is as such:

A) Make a xeroxed transparency on acetate of white presstype lettering on a black background; B) using the same style presstype, except in black, make the matching title master, using a sheet of clear acetate as the background.

Stephen Bydal  
Jousting Productions  
2912 Jaffe Road  
Wilmington, DE 19808

## Squib Advice

... I have been doing makeup FX for films for a few years and have been on sets where squibs have been used and I think there are a few things that should be said on the subject.

First, in order to obtain, store, or use squibs, one must be a qualified, licensed pyrotechnician. These licenses are obtained through various State and Federal Agencies and require a substantial amount of training to receive as well as strict safety guidelines that, legally, must be adhered to.

That leads me to my second point. Squibs are very, very dangerous. They contain a small amount of high explosive. The procedure for placing a squib on an actor is an involved and exacting one. It incorporates various protective plates and wrappings. When these safety measures are not strictly adhered to the results can be disastrous.

I have heard of a lot of young filmmakers and FX artists who have improvised their own squibs. This is simply foolish for what, I hope, are obvious reasons. First and foremost are the safety reasons I have mentioned above. Taping a cherry bomb to someone is not the same as a pro carefully placing the proper safety devices on an actor or stuntman for a bullet hit effect. Secondly, squibs are very carefully manufactured as to assure a uniform performance from squib to squib. One does not get that assurance from a firecracker, or worse yet, a homemade explosive device.

There are alternatives to explosives for obtaining bullet hit FX. One such effect I outlined in this column in a previous issue (CINEMAGIC # 24). Try using compressed air or pull lines to blow or pull away pre-cut sections of clothing and to pop small blood bags.

Again, squibs should be handled only by licensed pros, and for heaven's sake don't use any unapproved explosive devices yourself.

A while back when I was foolish enough to suggest a similar explosive solution to a bullet hit problem and gave the excuse, "... Yeah, I know it's dangerous, but the shot will look great!" A friend said to me, "I'll have them put that one on your gravestone!"

This magazine caters to cre-

ative people, please use your creativity wisely, come up with a safe solution to your bullet hit FX problems. Explosives are dangerous, leave them to the pros. Please!

Tom Lauten  
Brooklyn, NY

## Calling All Writers!

... Attention teenage writers! I am a sixteen-year-old writer who is looking for a few partners, male or female, to join forces with me and write a creative and interesting novel or script. If there is anybody out there who enjoys writing manuscripts with drama and suspense, please write soon.

Christopher Noth  
5 Haynes Creek Road  
Rome, GA 30161

## Prosthetic Magic

... I am fifteen years old and I have never worked with foam latex. I would like to be a make-up special effects artist when I get older. I am also a magician. I have a problem. I received a trick recently, it's called the needle thru the arm. The way the instructions say to do the trick is take rubber cement on your arm, grease the needle and put the needle on the skin and push the skin around the needle; forming a secret tunnel. Keep your arm with the secret tunnel away from the audience and put the needle through. (It looks stupid. You can see a line between the needle). I thought if I make a foam latex appliance and put it on my arm, put the needle thru that it would work better. The needle is special, it looks like an old fashioned hat pin, but the bulb at the end looks like it is ceramic, and the squeeze bulb is full of blood. Would the blood drip from the appliance? The dean at my school wants me to do the trick to the seniors. (I go to Notre Dame.) Is there a place where I can write to so I can ask them if they can make me some appliances. I don't have time to experiment with it now. I would pay them. The appliances must be seamless, and very soft. (Measuring 1 1/2 inches wide by 3 inches long) I tried gelatine, wax, liquid latex. Please help! P.S. Where can I get a Jason hockey mask? Just kidding!

Frank Wagner  
8233 Oconto  
Niles, IL 60648



## Evil Eyes

... I am a 14-year-old filmmaker who has been working off and on on one film for the last three years. Filming has been halted several times because of climactic conditions (snow). I need to know where to purchase special-effects contact lenses for a transformation sequence.

If there are any other filmmakers in the South Ontario area, please correspond. I need all the help I can get for my upcoming feature-length film, *The Weapon Master*.

Jamie Dean  
11 Glen Vista Dr. #33  
Hamilton, Ontario  
Canada L8K-6M7

Try looking in the "Supply Sources" list that John Dods compiled for special effects artists. The list appears in CINEMAGIC #35. It lists sources for artificial eyes. However, you may need scleral or corneal lenses for your effects sequence. In that case, see your optometrist—and be prepared to spend big bucks, because that's a custom job.

## Stock Footage

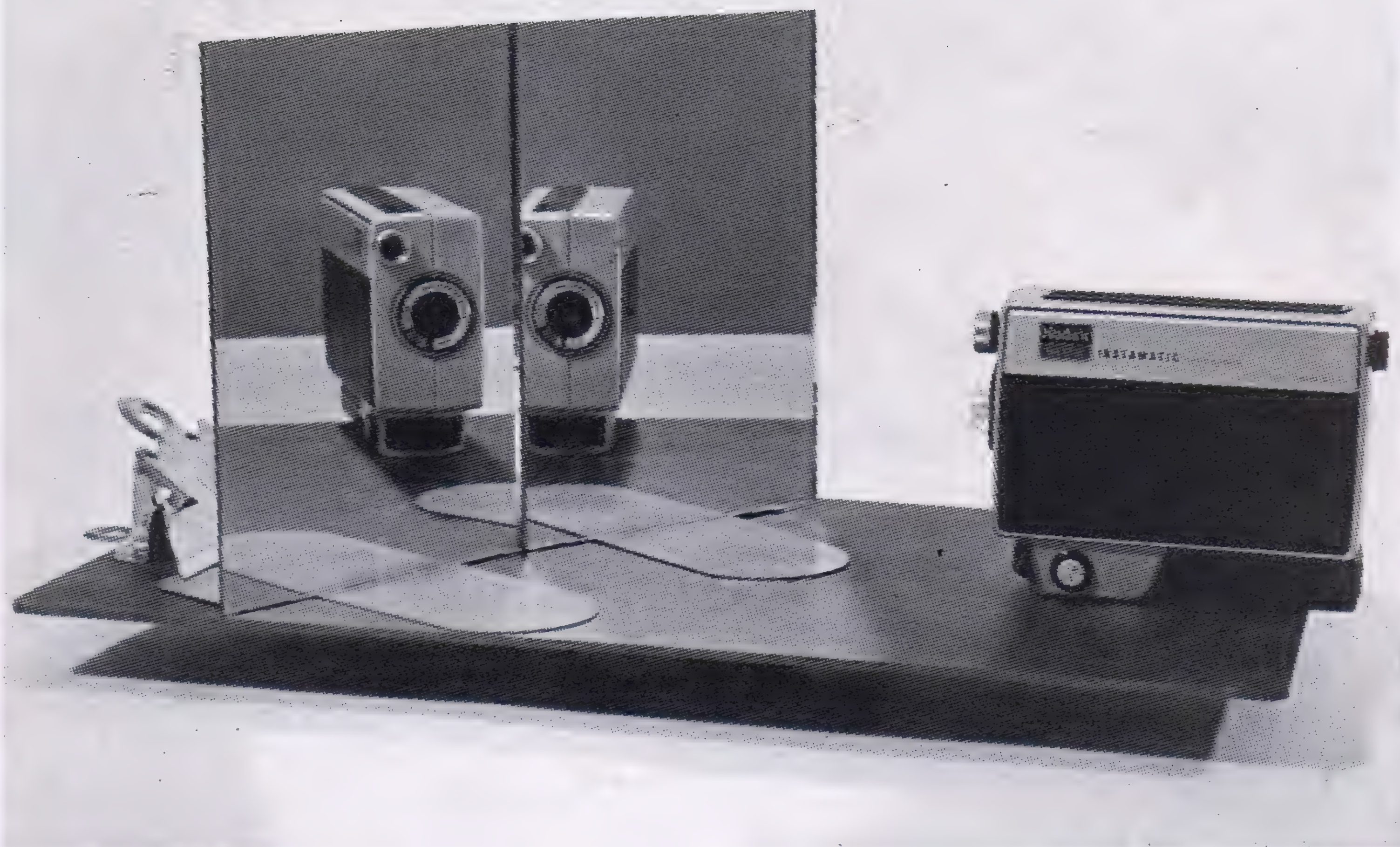
... Firstly, I am looking for a source of stock footage that could be used for some scenes in my film. They need not be anything elaborate, just something to use for establishing purposes.

Are you aware of anyone renting high quality Super-8 equipment. I have one Bolex camera, but would love to have one or two more to use in the production.

I am hoping you will print this letter and perhaps attract the attention of some other film oriented people in my area. I am specifically in need of someone with some background in the area of special effects makeup.

John Thonen  
3001 S. Scott  
Independence, MO 64052

Stock footage libraries are available in almost every major city, look in the yellow pages; Most libraries specialize, for example: MacGillivray Freeman Films specializes in aerial footage—landscapes, water, cities; Halcyon Days has sports, newsreel and 50s footage. All libraries charge a search fee of about \$100 to \$250 depending upon your requirements. You then must pay a license fee based on the footage you actually use. Stock libraries maintain footage in 16mm, 35mm and even 70mm. If you need a dazzling clip of surf action, nature wildlife, or an aerial, stock libraries are a very inexpensive alternative to shooting it yourself.



Michael Riley's experimental 3-D rig is described in CINEMAGIC #33.

## 3-D Equipment

... I just received issue number 34 and read your column which touched on 3-D filmmaking once again. I wrote to you a couple of months ago and filled you in on how my first 3-D film looked so I thought I'd throw a few more comments at you.

The major problem with the home-made set-up is that it's not rigid enough. Even using it outside in a breeze is enough to shake the mirrors. I had intended to construct an outfit like the Elmo unit, but I had to abandon this idea because of lack of equipment and materials. Although the design is straight forward, the precision required is too great for the materials I had available.

What is really needed is someone with the time and equipment to produce these 3-D attachments on a wider scale. The love for 3-D has to be there (at least I could see it in the people who watched my film). Unfortunately, the red/green system that is available is just not suitable, in my view, as the red/green is a step downwards from color 3-D that most of us are use to.

I wish more people would catch the 3-D bug. Maybe then there would be more available at a good price. I can't see myself filming much more with the hinged mirrors since even projection is a very time consuming task. Lets hope that more will come from this exciting screen dimension since the release of Walt Disney's *Captain EO*.

Bartley Busse  
P.O. Box 36  
Neidpath, Sask;  
Canada S 0N 1S0

Michael Riley's ingeniously simple Do-It-Yourself 3-D system (CINEMAGIC #33) is ideal for the

film experimenter who wants to get some idea of how 3-D works without investing a lot of money in hard to find equipment. If the Riley 3-D rig whets your appetite for 3-D filmmaking, I would suggest that you start hunting for commercially-made 3-D attachments in either the 16mm or Super-8 gauges. The 3-D source list in issue #33 lists several possibilities.

## Beating Strobing

... In CINEMAGIC #29 there was an article on Jim Danforth and he stated that you could create a blur with a stop-motion model by exposing a single frame of film more than one time. This I understood, but then he said that he also exposed a single frame from 1/4 of a second to 4 seconds, my question is how do you expose a frame of film for a longer time then it normally takes to expose one? (Which is immediately after the single frame button is pushed.)

Corey Popp  
2015 Lakspur Dr.  
Appleton, WI 54915

You must have a camera that has an animation shutter. Very few Super-8 cameras have this feature, but some do. Maybe the people at Super8 Sound can help you. You can contact them at: 95 Harvey St., Cambridge, MA 02140, (617) 876-5876. Be sure to see Doug Borton's article. "Beating Strobing" in CINEMAGIC #34.

## For Sale?

... I was reading a back issue of your magazine and saw the articles regarding amateur filmmakers and their films. I am specifically interested in the films of John Dods and John Matthews. Is there any outlet for ob-

taining these short fairy tales either on video (preferably) or 16mm film formats? Any information you can provide me with will be appreciated.

Brad Arrington  
13716 E. Oak St.  
Whittier, CA 90605

## Fans of Jack

... I enjoyed Paul Mandell's article on *Jack the Giant Killer*. As usual, Paul researched his material well.

As a footnote, I thought your readers might like to know the extent of Edward Small's obsession to emulate *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*. He scrapped the first scenes of the Cormoran (or maybe it was the two-headed giant) because it didn't walk like the Cyclops from *Sinbad*. It took more frames per step and Small wanted them to be exactly the same. Even Bernard Herrmann's score from *Sinbad* was lifted for the *Jack the Giant Killer* radio spots. Small didn't want to take any chance of being original.

The musical version of Small's film, if I'm not mistaken, turned up about three years ago and was to my knowledge never run at theaters which suggests that it was done for a sale to pay TV. Hopefully, the original version will survive and resurface someday. Because even though it was a rip-off, it was fun.

Mark McGee  
811 Cinnamon Lane  
Duarte, CA 92020

Would it be possible to get *Jack* put on TV? I would love to see it and I'm sure others interested in that type of movie would also enjoy it.

Gerry Green  
301 West Armour #824  
Kansas City, MO 64111





Christopher Hillman's elaborate model.

### Hoosier Model Maker

... Ever since I saw *Star Wars* for the first time in sixth grade, I think my lifestyle has been slightly altered.

I started working with the motion camera at about that time when *King Kong*, *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters* were released, and each film has changed my point of view of science fiction to some extent. It gives you such a large terrain of situations to create.

Now I'm pretty much grown and am an artist looking into other mediums besides paint, ink, graphite... etc. I have now gotten to model making and film again after a one or two year slump and I am thinking of filming one of two or three movie shorts.

Over the years I've found that out of all my work in any kind of art, the best creations were the ones that I knew would be seen and not just stored away in some closet. So I thought that before I started work on a new movie I should try to find an audience, at least for the models.

This model is about 4' 5" long, has two moveable antennae beacons (about 10 LEDs) and an engine light and illuminated bridge. Its shell is constructed with numerous model parts, bits of plastic, metal parts, cream containers for secondary engine parts... etc., etc.

Christopher Hillman  
3532 South 14½ St.  
Terre Haute, IN 47802

### Reader Tips

... I have discovered much to my dismay that latex deteriorates when it is exposed to sunlight for long periods of time. However, a good coat of pigment (acrylic/latex mixture, rubber

mask grease, or rubber cement/universal colorant) seems to prevent the deterioration by blocking out the sunlight. Mixing the pigment into the latex before casting does not seem to prevent deterioration.

\* Styrofoam packing material (the kind which is used to pack antiques and comes in white, worm-like strings) can be used to great effect in Savini-style tear-away body parts. It is well-suited for this because it rips so easily. It can be glued on costumes or sets for surface detail and texture.

I learned how to make a film holding rack for editing from USC graduate John Perrine. It is simply a cardboard box with a piece of wood going up each side, and wires on a piece of wood on top. The box has an open top, and the film hangs down into it. The wire is passed thru the sprocket holes to hold film up. It is very easy to make, but I have found it to be indispensable. Last, but not least, I recently discovered a toy called "Poseman" at a nearby Toys 'r Us. The posable toy is from Toybox Corp. It is made of plastic, and is not a true ball jointed armature, but it is also much cheaper (I got it on sale for about \$7). It comes with a stand and accessories, but by building up with liquid latex and sheet foam, a resourceful filmmaker (what filmmaker isn't) could have an animation model that is at least better than wire. So far, the Poseman I purchased has held up very well. It is one foot tall, and has metal feet so that it can stand.

Webster Colcord  
33472 McKenzie View  
Eugene, OR 97401

... Before reading your Spring (CINEMAGIC #34) issue, our

The wings of the ship were looped between the two wires. The effect was a fast moving, straight ship, with no signs of a puppet rod. When we saw your arrow effect in issue #34, we noted the similarities.

If anyone is interested in our 8mm movie company, please feel free to write us. "Low Budget Entertainment, For Low Budget People."

L.B. Productions  
2179 Ranchwood Pl.  
Riverside, CA 92506

### A Direct Line

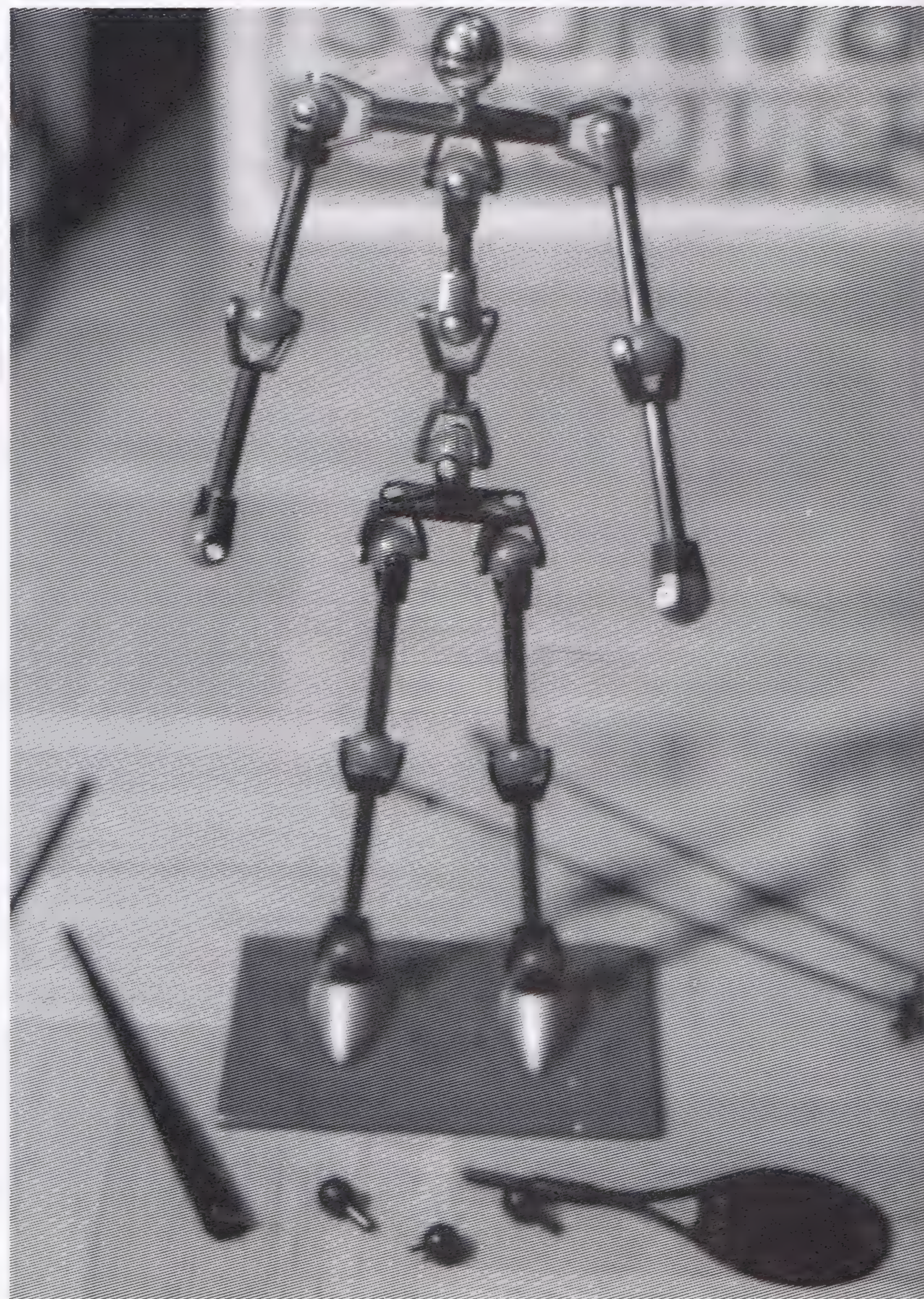
... Readers who have access to CompuServe can contact CINEMAGIC'S Editor David Hutchison directly through Easyplex E-Mail. His User I.D. is 71036,1477. He can also be reached through M.C.I. Mail #136-7254.

*Address all correspondence to:  
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Forum, c/o Starlog Press Inc.,  
475 Park Avenue South, New  
York, NY 10016.*

*Due to the enormous volume of  
mail received, the editor regrets  
individual replies are impossible.*

amateur movie company did a movie involving homemade spaceships quickly zooming to a planet's surface. Our problem in creating this effect, was how to keep the model (on a puppet rod) perfectly straight. Our solution was to use two side by side "tracks" of fishing line. Each connected to the starting point, and the landing point of each ship.

This basic armature can be bought in a toy store.





# STARLOG

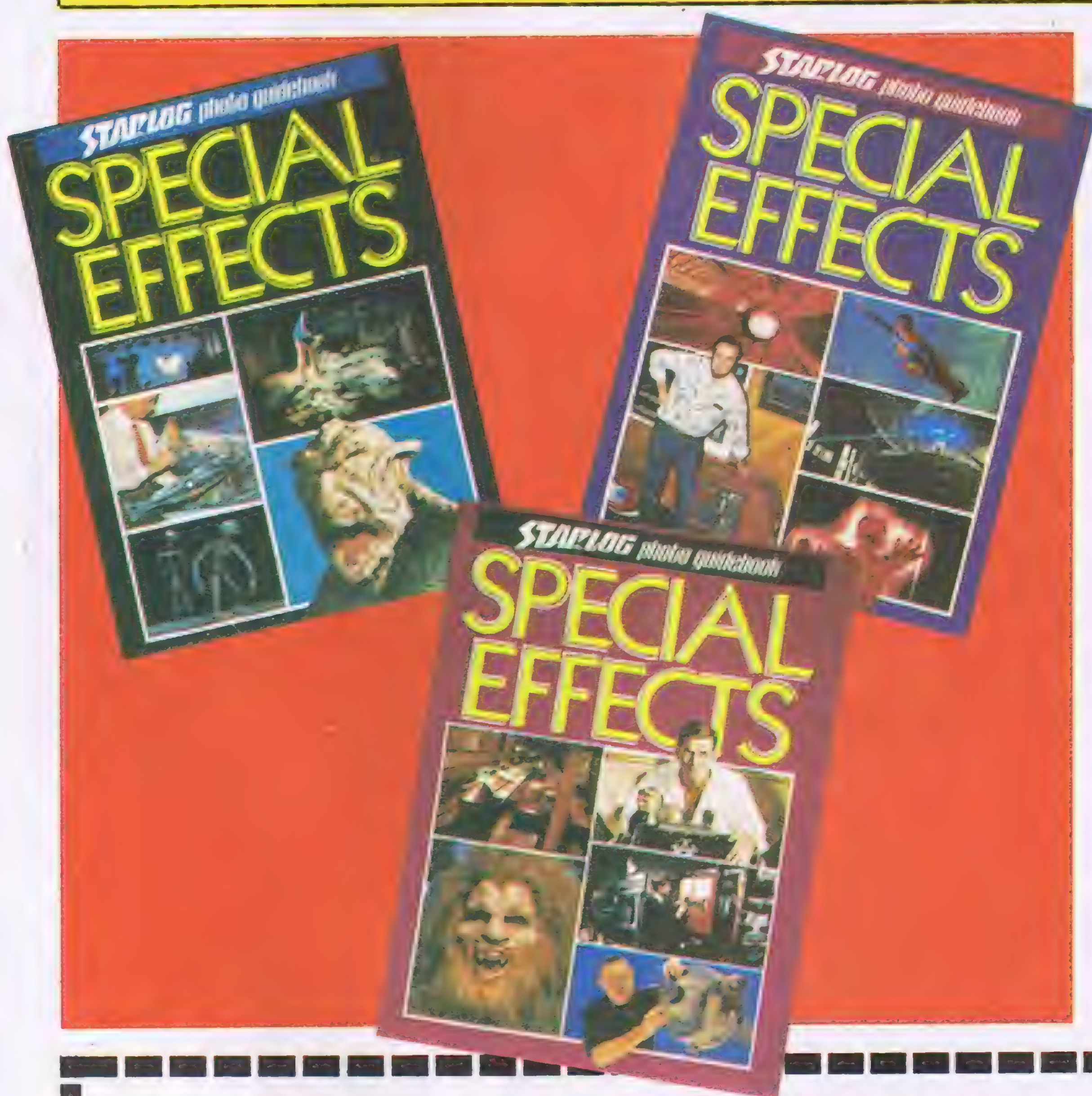
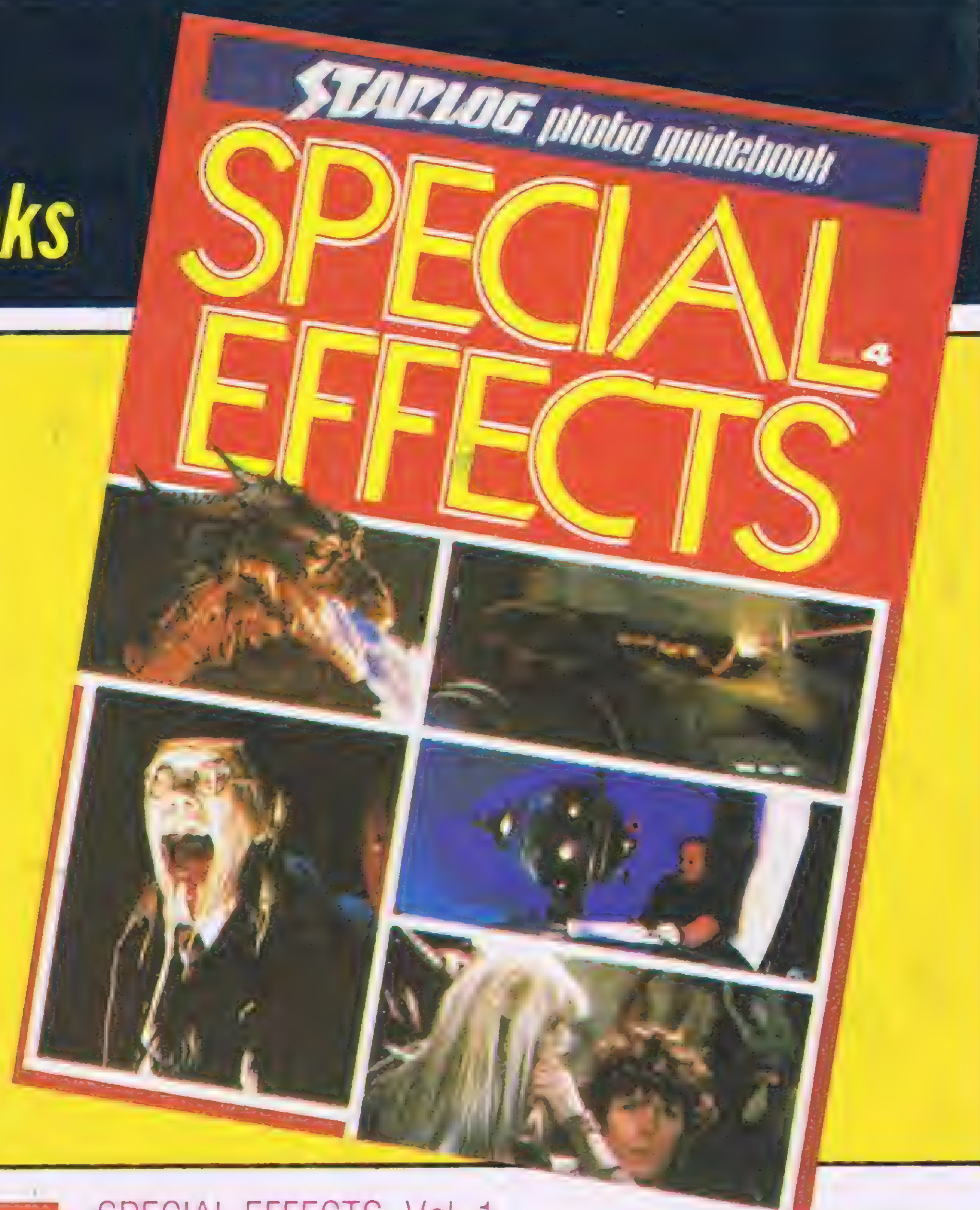
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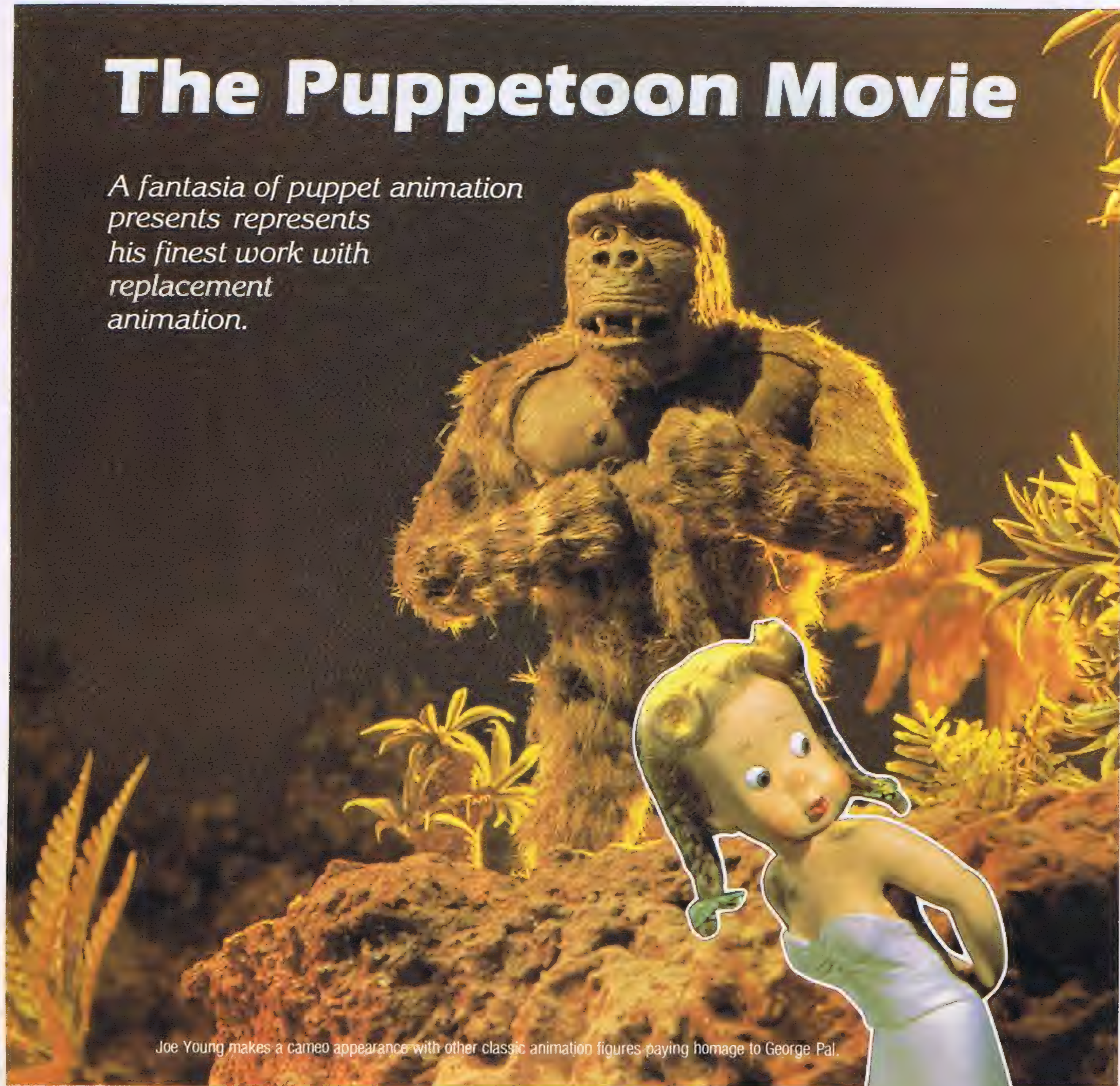
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# The Puppetoon Movie

*A fantasia of puppet animation presents represents his finest work with replacement animation.*

PHOTO: TONY ALDERSON



Joe Young makes a cameo appearance with other classic animation figures paying homage to George Pal.

**M**ost fantasy film fans are familiar with George Pal's Academy Award winning films from the 50s—*The Time Machine*, *The Circus of Dr. Lao*, *The Conquest of Space*, *War of the Worlds*, *Destination Moon* and so on. With these films, which have continued to delight today's audiences with their brilliant style, Pal established benchmark standards for SF/fantasy adventure in feature films. Not so familiar to today's audiences, however, is the brilliant, virtuous work exhibited in a series of animated shorts, which he created in the late 1930s and throughout the 1940s.

Even by today's standards, his Puppetoons, as they were called, were produced on a lavish scale, rich with production values. Filmed in glowing Technicolor, they look surprisingly modern in their Art Deco styling. In 1943, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences voted

Pal a special Oscar "for the development of novel methods and techniques in the production of short subjects known as Puppetoons."

Producer Arnold Leibovit, who last year made *The Fantasy Film Worlds of George Pal* (STARLOG #108), a documentary feature with extensive clips from Pal's fantasy shorts and features, has assembled a compilation of ten Pal Puppetoon shorts originally produced between 1937 and 1947.

Born in Cegled, Hungary in 1908, the son of a theatrical family, Pal studied architecture in Budapest and began his career as a cartoonist, capitalizing on his ability to draw when no one would give him a building to design. Eventually, he made his way to Berlin, the center of the European film industry, where he designed sets for the famed UFA studios. Pal and his wife escaped the worsening

Judy is probably the least stylized of the Puppetoon characters.





political climate by fleeing to Paris.

It was the boredom of drawing the same figure over and over again for a cigarette commercial which led him to stop-motion dimensional animation. At first he merely animated the cigarettes themselves marching and moving in columns, but eventually he started putting faces on the cigarettes to give them some personality, and with the addition of arms and legs he soon had a cast of characters.

He was invited to Holland, where he spent several years directing commercials and short films. Among his first was "Ship of the Ether" (1934), which utilized models made from glass. His films were instantly successful and he soon found himself with 70 employees working in a converted butcher shop studio.

Quickly his commercials grew into story films, and his fame spread. Pal had his sights set on Hollywood and in the late 30s, and just two months before the Nazis invaded Holland, Pal and his wife arrived in the United States. He established his studio at 1041 N. McCadden Place gathering around him a core of highly skilled European and American artisans.

*The Puppetoon Movie* includes ten of Pal's animated shorts in their entirety. Three of Pal's most famous Puppetoons are included: "Tulips Shall Grow" was Pal's wartime tribute to little Holland during the Nazi invasion; "Tubby the Tuba" in which Victor Jory narrates Paul Tripp's story of a tuba who just *once* would like to carry the melody, and features the music of composer George Kleinsinger; Pal turned to American folklore in 1946 with "John Henry and the Inky Poo," which *Ebony* magazine lauded as the first film to treat the black man with love and dignity featuring a black hero.

Also included in their entirety are: "Jasper in a Jam" which features Charlie Barnet and his orchestra, Peggy Lee singing "Ol' Man Mose" and Louis Armstrong; "Together in the Weather," "Philips Broadcast of 1938," "The Sleeping Beauty," "South Sea Sweethearts," and "Philips Cavalcade." Leibovit excerpted three others and created a montage from another four.

Among the animators whose work is represented by *The Puppetoon Movie* are: Josef Misik, Bando Sdabo, Ray Harryhausen, Willis O'Brien, Wah Chang, Reginald Massey, Gene Warren, Sr., Phil Kellison, Bob Baker, Blanding Sloane, and Fred Moore with director Duke Goldstone and cameraman John Abbott. The list of credits at the film's end is quite lengthy as many artists worked with the Pal studio over the years, but these are some of the stellar names.

Arnold Leibovit assembled his compilation with original nitrate Technicolor imbibition prints, which have been archived by Mrs. Pal and the UCLA film archives. The shorts have been carefully duped with optical flashing to preserve the richness of the color onto new Eastman color



Punch and Judy from  
"Together in the Weather"  
(1945).



PHOTO: ZOLI VIDOR

PHOTO: STUART O'BRIEN

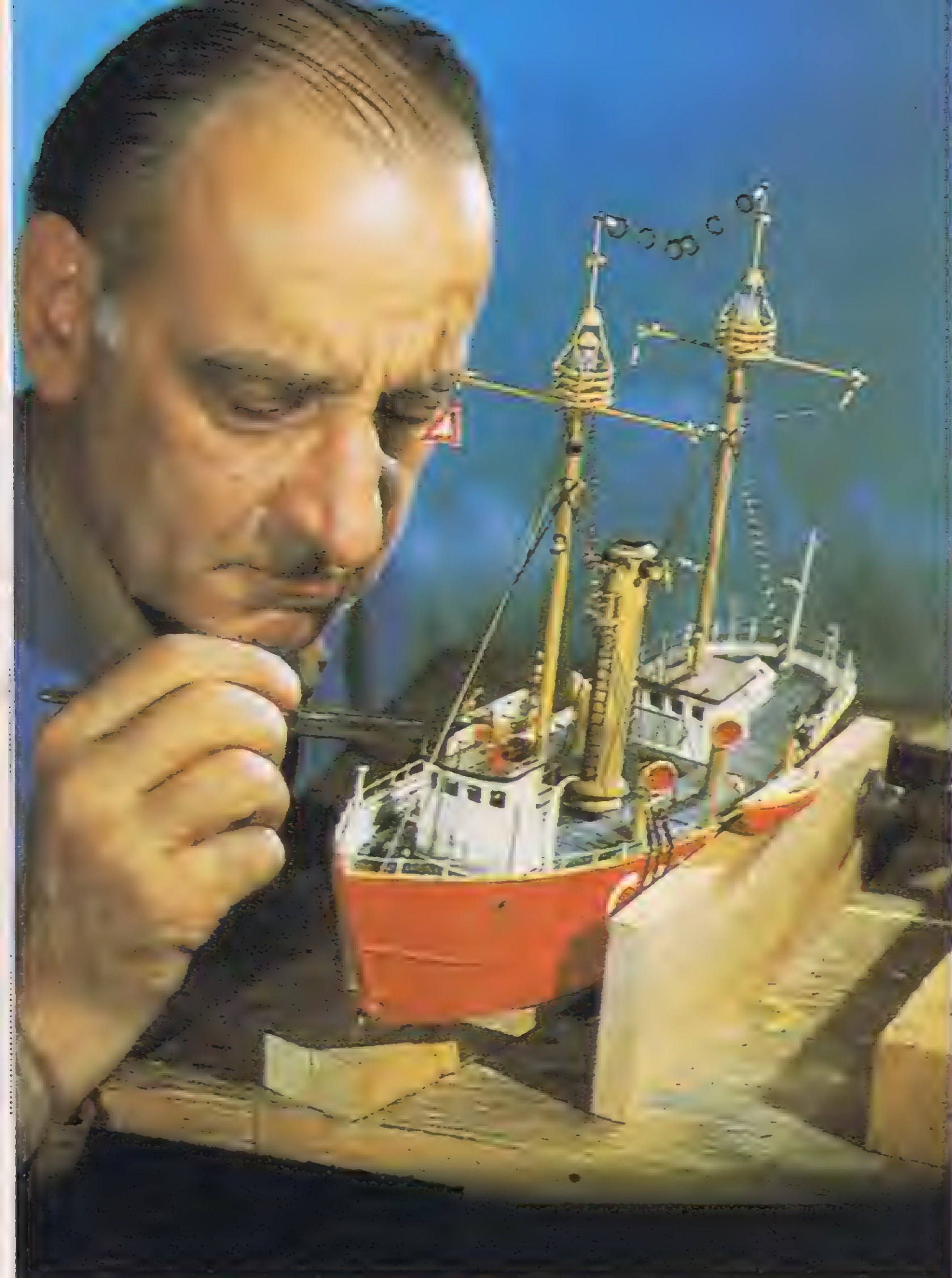
In "Mr. Strauss Takes a Walk" (1942) the new  
Puppetoons  
detail and production  
revealed

Arnie the Dinosaur reviews some Pal clips in the  
framing sequence created by Gene Warren, Jr. and  
Peter Kleinow of Fantasy II for the framing se-  
quences in *The Puppetoon Movie*.

PHOTO: TONY ALDERSON







Modelmaker Fred Malatesta adds rigging to one of the finely crafted miniatures created for the *Puppetoon*s.

PHOTO: ZOLI VIDOR

"Jasper's Minstrels" (1945) recalls the dramatic lighting and compositions used for Disney's *Fantasia*.



PHOTO: ZOLI VIDOR



"John Henry and the Inky Poo" (1946) was nominated for an Oscar; it was lauded for its heroic and compassionate depiction of black people.



Art Clokey's *Gumby*, animated by Peter Kleinow, hosts *The Puppetoon Movie*.

negative and re-framed to a 1.85 aspect ratio by optical cameraman Harry Walton. About 50 cuts were re-positioned to keep puppet heads from being cropped in the widescreen format. Sound has been re-mixed into Ultra-Stereo.

Framing *The Puppetoon Movie* is about eight minutes of new animation directed by Gene Warren, Jr. and animated by Peter Kleinow of *Fantasy II*. Art Clokey's famed character *Gumby* and some of his favorite friends are gathered to pay tribute to George Pal. Clokey, Dallas McKennon and the late Paul Frees supply voices for the principal characters.

Animator Peter Kleinow probably knows more about *Gumby* and his pals than anyone else. . . with the possible exception of Art Clokey. . . having spent a good many years animating the characters and writing scripts for the characters. He and director Gene Warren, Jr. took Leibovit's script tightened it a bit and "gumbyized" the dialogue.

"We both invented quite a bit of business for the characters to do," says Warren. "Gary Campsi built most of the props and sets. I threw together the jungle set. Mike Minor helped with some drawings for the set and Bob Burns lent us three or four puppets for the final scene.

"We approached this quite differently from the Saturday morning *Gumby* show—these sequences for Arnold [Leibovit] have much more scope and the camera moves a lot. You're going to feel like you're watching a live action movie where you've got a camera operator constantly making little corrections. You don't usually notice it, but even on close-ups there are usually tiny pans or subtle tilts during a shot. If *Gumby* moves slightly and tilts his head, the camera will drift over a little, which is just what a live action camera operator would do with a real actor.

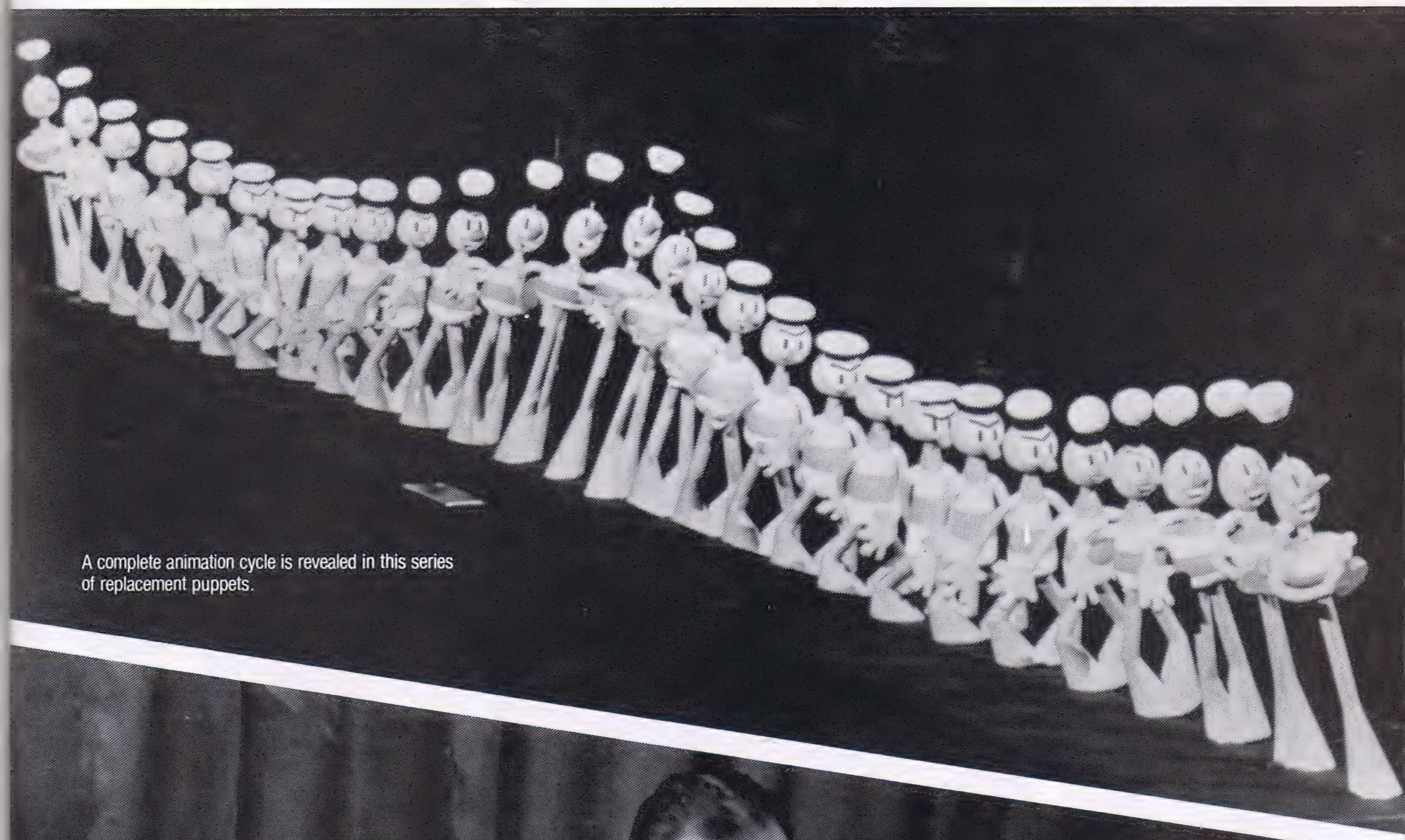
"I try to keep away from the rigid, mechanical camera moves that are typical of stop-motion work. I rackover every frame, so that I can make those tiny adjustment moves during a shot and maintain a fluid easing in and out of the big moves."

Warren was willing to share a technique that he and Peter Kleinow use when animating with water in a scene. In the jungle sequence, the table top set has a pool with real water. Generally, this is a no-no in stop-motion animation, but there is a way to keep the water moving in a natural way.

"The secret is to animate on even seconds," Warren reveals. "Pete kept a stop watch going, while he was animating, so that he could fire a frame precisely every 20 seconds. Now, on some frames it would only take five seconds to go in, move the puppet and step back, but he would wait until it hit 20 to fire off the frame. Other frames, he'd be racing to get back because he had a lot of moves to make.

PHOTO: TONY ALDERSON

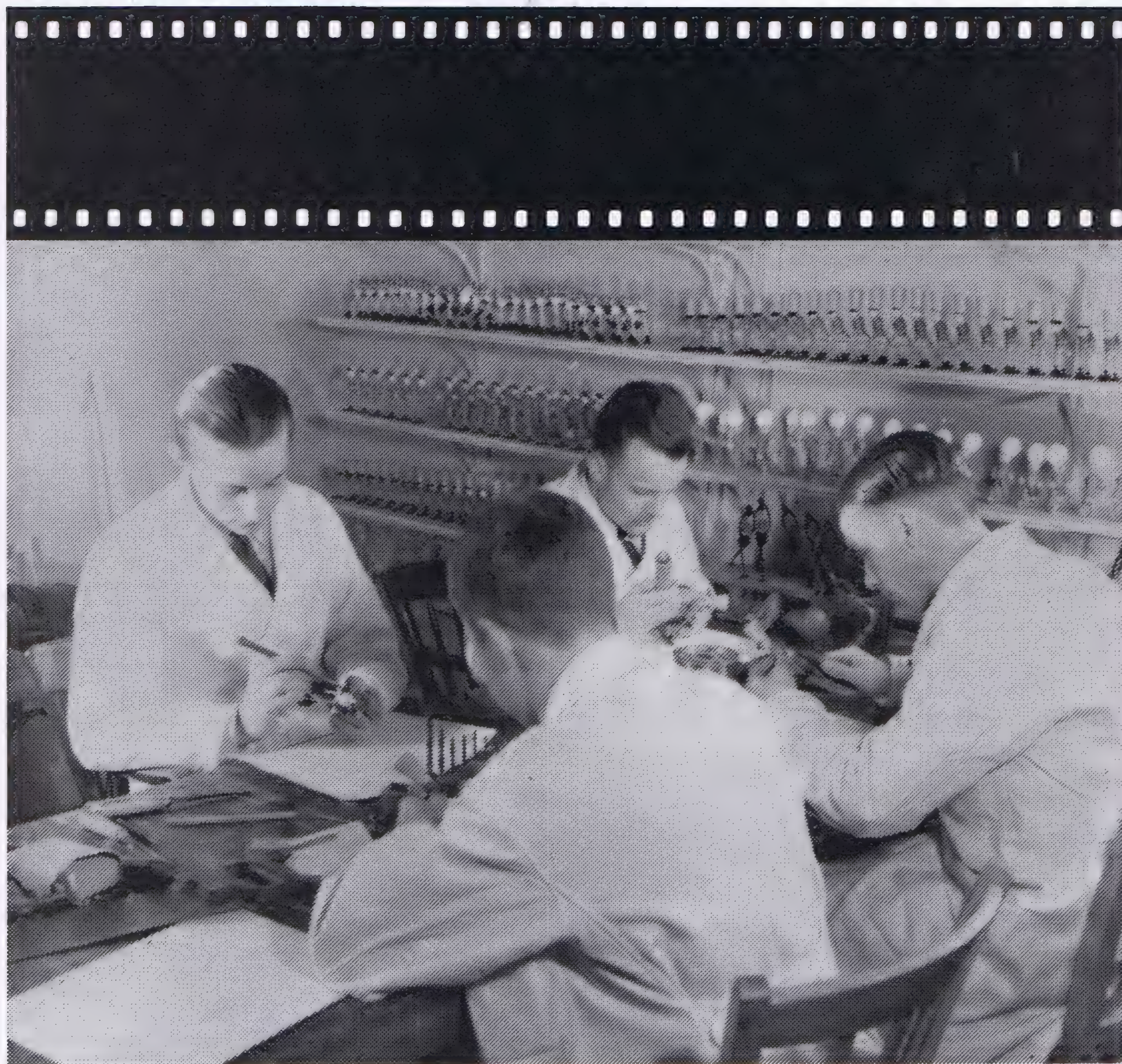




A complete animation cycle is revealed in this series of replacement puppets.







Pal's Puppetoon workshop was a melting pot of craftsman of every nationality working diligently to create the hundreds of puppets used in the replacement animation cycles.

Animators work from highly detailed timing sheets, replacing each puppet for each frame of film. All of the "creative" work is done in pre-production in contrast to the Ray Harryhausen technique of using moveable puppets with the performance created on the set in front of the camera.



"The reason for all this is because water is never completely still, there are tiny dust particles and debris being moved by tiny currents, which are revealed by the time-lapse action of stop-motion photography. Years ago, I found that you could get a very natural moving water effect, if you shot in even increments. What you will see in the film is a very still pond with a slight current. It looks very natural, because the current is moving smoothly. You don't get ripples, but you get a natural effect."

Most of the Puppetoons in the film are presented without their original opening and closing titles, since it would have been very tedious to sit through them each time. "We created some choreographed transitions between the films," says Warren. "For example, we created a bridge between 'The Sleeping Beauty' and 'Tulips Shall Grow.' There's a heart wipe on the scene where 'Sleeping Beauty' ends with two puppets kissing. I made a dimensional heart that we did a camera move on. A dimensional heart comes out of the middle, wipes the frame and then goes back down and you're on 'Tulips Shall Grow.' Then there are some curtain wipes and dissolves between the others."

The final shot in the framing sequences produced by Fantasy II is a crowd scene of famous stop-motion puppets saying thank you to George Pal. You'll see the Mr. Peanut, Speedy Alka-Seltzer, Mighty Joe Young, the Pillsbury Dough-Boy, Hans the Chocolate Man from Nestle, a gremlin from Warners and Spielberg, and lots more.

Music in the Puppetoons is by David Raksin, Thurston Knudson, Edison von Ottenfeld and Clarence Wheeler among others. Additional music has been scored by veteran Disney composer and arranger Buddy Baker with title graphics from Walt Disney Graphics Services by Ed Garbert, who has created titles for Disney films since the 50s.

George Pal died in 1980, leaving behind an office full of yet unrealized scripts, storyboards, production art and models. Pal had spent the last decade-and-a-half of his life trying to get bankers and studio heads to say "yes" to just one more project, but no one seemed to have the time or interest for this soft-spoken genius to whom modern fantasy filmmaking owes so much. *The Puppetoon Movie* gives us a chance to sample Pal's creative brilliance in the years before he attempted feature films. Even without his tremendous output of ground breaking films throughout the decade of the 50s, his Puppetoon shorts would be enough to ensure him a place of greatness in the history of animation.

*The Puppetoon Movie*, written and produced by Arnold Leibovit, is being distributed in the United States and Canada this Summer by Expanded Entertainment.

CM



A scene from "South Sea Sweethearts"—a Puppetoon short created for Paramount in the 1940s.



It was George Pal who brought the technique of replacement animation to the United States in the late 1930s with his Puppetoons.



## Gerald Perry Finnerman

**W**ould you watch TV or go to the movies with your eyes closed? Go ahead and try it. I'd be willing to bet the ranch that it isn't nearly as enjoyable. We see movies and TV to do just that—to see. Surprisingly enough, the people responsible for setting a mood, making our favorite actor or actress look their best and just plain giving us something worth looking at often go unnoticed and unrewarded by the general public. I'm sure you remember who directed *Star Wars*, but can you recall the cameraman's name?

The person we're talking about is the director of photography (commonly known as the 'DP') and he has one of the toughest jobs in Hollywood. What he puts on the screen can make a lot of people, both in front of and behind the camera, look very good or very bad. One person who has made quite a number of people look very good is Gerald Perry Finnerman, whose contribution to some of the country's favorite television shows has, until now, gone mostly unnoticed.

Jerry Finnerman did not begin his illustrious career by attending film school, although he does recommend it to other would-be filmmakers. "It will help," he explains. "You will learn about different cameras, lenses, what a key light is, and so on. Those who have gone to film school seem to be able to adapt themselves to different situations a lot better than those who haven't." Finnerman went to Loyola University in Los Angeles on a football scholarship, majoring in abnormal psychology and minoring in microbiology.

His family tree was composed mainly of doctors, with one exception: his father, Perry Finnerman, who was a DP at Warner Brothers in the 50s, photographing such series as *77 Sunset Strip* and *Bourbon Street*. During one summer of particularly heavy production, Finnerman *pere* asked his son to be his assistant. Jerry Finnerman had a great respect for his father and immensely enjoyed working alongside him (he still uses his father's light meter today). This, combined with the thrill of working in the film business, hooked him and he began to work as his father's assistant cameraman.

Soon after his father passed away, Finnerman moved on to assist his father's good friend, two-time Oscar winner Harry Stradling Sr., on *My Fair Lady* and *The Picture of Dorian Grey*. For eight years, Jerry



worked as his assistant cameraman while Harry Stradling Jr. served as his father's camera operator. They worked together for several years, until a show called *Star Trek* began to get off the ground.

### To Trek or Not to Trek

"I was operating on a Cary Grant feature called *Walk Don't Run* in Japan. When we came back, he [Harry Stradling Sr.] said, 'They called my son to do a series called *Star Trek* and he doesn't want to leave *Gunsmoke*. . . they called me and I was

asked if I would speak to him and I said, 'No, that's up to him,' but I did recommend you.'" Finnerman was pleased with his mentor's trust, but didn't feel that he was ready to tackle the job of director of photography for several reasons. "The age of the average cinematographer was about 66, and even at 32 I was considered the youngest camera operator in Hollywood. I didn't feel I could accept as a cinematographer." But Harry Stradling Sr. pushed him to go and at least talk to the producers of the show, a move that



turned out to be a worthwhile idea.

"I went over and talked to Gene Roddenberry, who was the executive producer of the series," Finnerman recalls. "He seemed to like me, so he said, 'We'll give you a chance to do a *Star Trek* on the recommendation of Harry Stradling Sr., and if we like your work, we'll give you another one and see what happens.'"

Despite this meeting, the young camera operator was still reluctant at the prospect of becoming a DP. "I didn't know what I would do as a young man, 32, coming in with a bunch of grips and electricians who were 20 years older than myself. I didn't know whether they would accept me or even if I could cut it."

During his deliberation, he and Stradling were shooting test footage of Natalie Wood for the film *Penelope*. Suddenly, Harry was called to New York and left Finnerman in charge of finishing the tests. "It didn't seem to be that tough. The stuff looked good, I copied Harry's style, she [Natalie Wood] was happy. . . so I went over to *Star Trek*."

Perhaps the detail which most pleased Finnerman was the fact that Roddenberry did not try to dictate what the show should look like; it was left up to Finnerman. While piecing together what that look should be, he sought advice from Harry Stradling Sr. on his lighting technique. "There was a picture I had liked very much that Harry had won the Academy Award

on, *Dorian Grey*. It was a black and white picture (I like black and white a lot better than I do color) and I went over to Harry and said, 'I like this picture. I've seen stuff you've done in color that looks like this picture and I don't see a lot of guys shooting color the way you do. What do you do? And he said, 'You have to take the lights so far around until it scares you. That's when it'll look good.'"

Finnerman believes in lighting color the same way you would black and white, which results in a heavy use of *crosslighting*—placing the key light (your main source of illumination) at a severe angle to your actor, creating shadows across the face and leaving one side darkened. This also adds dimension to a person's face and creates a mood, as opposed to front or top lighting, which bathes the face in light and wipes out most of the shadows, a technique often used simply because of its ease.

"On the first show ['The Corbomite Maneuver'] I took the lights around so far it scared me. It really did. I'd have a 3/4 cross key on somebody and very little fill. Just enough so you could see the eyes." The result was a show that achieved drama not only through the actor's performances, but through the mood his style of lighting created. If the content of a scene was downbeat or morose, he would heavily contrast the faces and fill the set with shadows.

"I like nothing that isn't textured," he admits. "I can't stand to go into a room and look at a flat wall. I have to break it up somehow. The trouble with features and television today that I look at frequently is that everyone uses bounce lights, so there's no source—no dimension. Everything is flat. But every once in a while you get a guy who gets into a mood and starts to crosslight and add some dimension; it's wonderful."

Another lighting technique that both Finnerman and *Star Trek* are famous for is the use of color. Few people today use color as a dramatic element. To many, it's a given factor and never used to enhance the mood or the environment. In the early days of color TV, the networks provided programs with color consultants who would dictate what could and could not be done with the medium. Color on faces, hair and on walls was forbidden and *Star*

Colored light creates a definite mood in "Metamorphosis."



Cross lighting with a minimum of fill adds character to Captain Kirk.







Deep shadows emphasize William Shatner's portrayal of an anguished Catpain Kirk.

*Trek* was not excluded. Fortunately, Finnerman and his crew has a way of dealing with the problem.

"We said, 'The heck with them. Let's see what Gene thinks.' So we did this sequence on another planet and it was really pretty. I threw in some reds, lavenders, some magentas and it really did look like a different place. We went to see it the next day, everybody oooed and ahhed, and Gene said, 'My God, that's what I'm looking for: a look of a different environment.' And that's what colors give you. A warm look, an exciting look. For a morose look you would use blues or greens, or for a love look you would use lavenders and purples. We spent a lot of time talking about it, so he [Roddenberry] said, 'Go ahead and do what you want, I like the look of color.'"

I found I could do a lot by having all the sets just painted white, and then I would take them and shadow them the way I wanted or put colors on them. So I had omnipotence on all the sets. I could make them look exactly the way I wanted to; I didn't use color to be prolific. I put them there to mean something and I felt they did. When you think of love, you think of warm colors the same way you'd use a certain type of music for a certain feeling."

Following completion of his first episode, the producer of the series, Gene Roddenberry and Gene Coon, approached Finnerman with a contract for Desilu, an action which took the cameraman by surprise as cinematographers were rarely put under contract. After having it looked over by his friend Harry Stradling Sr.'s agent, he signed the two-year contract

and began to work exclusively for Desilu (which was soon after bought by Paramount).

He worked primarily on *Star Trek*, although his talent was needed on *Mission: Impossible* towards the end of its first season. The show was constantly going over schedule and Finnerman was brought in to put the show back on track. The studio had placed the blame on the cinematographers, something he felt was unjustified.

"They had a multitude of problems on the show: the sets didn't seem to be ready and their crew had a bad attitude. They fired two cameramen that I admired and when I went over, I found a prevailing attitude of, 'When the coffee truck comes we'll all go,' instead of two people leaving and two staying to work on the set. I wouldn't put up with it. As far as the cameramen were involved, I didn't think they were getting a hell of a lot of cooperation from the crew. So, areas that I felt should be tightened up were tightened up. I went from an 11 day schedule per show to 7½ days, so I showed them it could be done."

After finishing the last several episodes on *Mission: Impossible*, he returned to his first love: *Star Trek* — a show that to this day he is proud to have been a part of.

#### After Trek

Finnerman stayed with the good ship *Enterprise* until the last nine episodes when he was offered a job photographing the Sidney Poitier picture, *The Last Man*. Feeling it was time to expand his horizons, he parted with Kirk and company under

good terms and began work on what was to be his first of many Poitier pictures. The pair worked straight through until 1970, when one day in Colorado, while scouting locations, the single engine plane Finnerman was in crashed into a 20-story mountain, killing everyone but himself and putting him in the hospital for a year.

When he went back to work in 1971, he took root at Universal, photographing television pilots and series such as *Emergency!*, *Kojak*, *Night Gallery* (where he did some directing) and even the short-lived *Planet of the Apes*. In 1975, at the request of a friend, he went to Columbia studios to take over *Police Woman* for a short while. After completing a movie of the week (also for Columbia), the head of the studio approached Finnerman and asked him to sign a contract.

"I said [to myself] this can't happen twice, because no other cinematographers are under contract in Hollywood. So we talked about it and he signed me to first a 6 month contract, then a year, and then two years."

As it turned out, this much-demanded-cameraman was put under exclusive contract to Columbia from 1975-80, during which he won an Emmy for the TV movie *Ziegfeld* and received three other nominations. Unfortunately, overlapping picture problems arose towards the end of his stay. Although he was occasionally 'loaned out' (allowed to do projects for studios other than Columbia), more and more jobs were offered to him that couldn't be accepted due to his commitment at Col-

The use of color enhances this dance sequence from "Big Man on Mulberry Street"—another of Finnerman's favorites.





umbia. He became increasingly frustrated and thought he had outgrown his contract.

"A good friend of mine, Buzz Kulik, called me and asked if I would like to do the Steve McQueen picture [The Hunter]. I tried like the devil to get a loan out because they had offered me a lot of money. I even said, 'Look, I'll split the money with the studio if you will loan me out,' but they couldn't do it because there were other things coming up. Then Sidney Poitier asked me to do a picture with him and then Jerry Ludon wanted me to do *Shogun*. All of these things I had to turn down because I was under contract. . . . I wanted to expand. . . . There were things I was doing that I didn't want to do. After I had won the Emmy on *Ziegfeld*, I really didn't want to do a half-hour comedy."

His contract ended with the actor's strike in 1980. His contract stated that if such a strike went beyond a given amount of time, he had the right to terminate. The strike did continue, so he ended his contract at Columbia and began to pick and choose his assignments. He eventually fell into doing a great many movies-of-the-week (something the talented Finnerman was happy with) until he received a call from the producers of . . .

### Moonlighting

The people behind one of today's hottest shows (Glenn Gordon Caron and Jay Daniel) turned out to be big fans of Mr. Finnerman's and the afternoon-long interview turned out to be a lot of fun for everybody. "We talked about how they liked this and how they hated that and about *Star Trek*," he fondly remembers.

"We talked about the concept of the show and how we all hated the zoom lens. . . they had done a pilot and they felt the girl [Cybill Shepherd] could have looked better and they asked me to look at the film. I got home and ran it and I called them and said, 'Yes, there's no doubt in my mind that I can make the girl look better.' I saw a lot of things that I didn't like that could be improved.

I hung up the phone and an hour later my agent called me and said, 'My God, they want to sign today!' So we did the first six episodes and I kind of set the style for that. They wanted the approach of a 1940's black and white look; the glossy look of MGM and Warner's with a down and dirty look like *The Maltese Falcon*."

Of paramount importance, however, was that Cybill Shepherd look as good as possible. Making a woman look beautiful on film is no easy task, and Finnerman is well known for his careful yet cocksure handling of females. "There were several things that could be done that hadn't been done. You can use a sliding diffusion [diffusion is a filter that gives an image a softer, more pleasing look]. It's a big piece of glass, clear on one end and diffused on the other in degrees. They used them in



It's not just makeup that brings Cybill Shepherd's good looks into the camera; lighting can make a big difference. Front light disposes of unwanted shadows, while backlighting makes her hair glow. As you can see, this sort of back light can make blonde hair turn white around the edges. The solution? Put a 1/2 MT-2 get on the light says Finnerman. It casts a light amber color which richens the blonde hair.

the 40's and 50's but got away from them when they went to the zoom lenses.

"Their problem [on *Moonlighting*] was how to keep the set sharp and when she walks in to make her look as good as possible in her close-ups. Probably the cameraman who shot the pilot was afraid he'd diffuse the set on the long shot and sacrificed a little for her close up.

"With a sliding diffusion, I could have the set clear in the long shot but as she walks in I could slide diffusion. It's right in front of the lens in a bracket and my assistant cameraman stands on one side and he just slides it back and forth. It's really very simple."

There was also the problem of keeping Cybill Shepherd, but not Bruce Willis diffused [who plays detective David Addison] in the 2-shot. The answer? Split diffusion, a filter with a varying degree of diffusion on the left and right side. "I can have her on one side of the screen diffused and him on the other either with a minimal amount of diffusion or an A or a B [diffusion filters are rated by letters depending upon the intensity of the effect]."

Some people have slighted Finnerman for what they believe to be an over-use of diffusion, feeling the final image is too glossy and unrealistic. "You have to realize," he answers, "that if they put the make up on [Shepherd] once in the morning which may take one to two hours, they're not going to put it on three dif-

Although they are in the same shot, notice how Maddie and David are lit differently: he is placed in crosslight, while she is bathed in frontlight.







Front lighting glamorizes Shepherd, while Willis is in hard cross light.

ferent times during the day. So [the amount of diffusion] I use depends upon how good she looks. If she's been in every scene all day and it's 7 o'clock at night I'm certainly going to use heavier diffusion than I would if she's just been called in at 4 o'clock and shot just a couple of sequences. . . Cybill looks good. She's just wonderful to me because she knows I'm not going to harm her. I'm not going to let them drop the camera down too low to

shoot up her nostrils. This is one of the Golden Rules of Photographing women.

"Women should be respected, but these are things that on other series they don't do. And I have enough input so that if the director wants to drop the camera down to the ground to shoot up on her, I can say 'Don't!'. Most of our past directors have not had a lot of single camera experience, and are told or encouraged to adhere to the style that I have set. Their job is to direct people and my job is to direct the lighting and the camera . . . and to see that they stick to the rules and style of the show."

The *Moonlighting* cameraman also has his own set of personal rules which he follows as well when it comes to lighting. "The secret of lighting," he reveals, "is, when you have a 2-shot, to crosslight the men and come in with a front light on the women. Basically, that's it. You favor your front lighting and a kind of 3/4 cross, scrimming them down until they balance out [a scrim is a piece of material put in front of a light which cuts down its intensity]."

Many times there's a scene [in *Moonlighting*] where I have two banks of dimmers. They're [Cybill Shepherd and Bruce Willis] walking back and forth and I don't want Cybill to walk into a harsh cross light that Bruce was in, so when they're on

the other side of the room, I'll take a whole bank of lights out and bring another bank of lights on so she's now in a front light and he's in the crosslight. You don't get much chance to rest with the show."

Another recognizable Finnerman touch is his heavy use of blue in *Moonlighting*'s night scenes. "I like to use color a lot. A lot of people say that it's false to use blue, but night is cold, night is blue. Look outside at the sky! I have to use double and triple blue [gels]. You've got to go with that deep a blue, so that you believe it. I'll put blue on the walls, blue outside . . . and they keep coming to me and saying, 'We want more, we want more!' Many of our shows are written for night or low key with the lights off."

Any regular viewer of *Moonlighting* knows that inventive lighting isn't the only thing that Jerry Finnerman does well. He's also an expert at capturing a long take and moving the camera, something used quite often on *Star Trek* and even more so on *Moonlighting*. Finnerman admits his influence in this category came from one of the masters of the moving camera, Alfred Hitchcock.

"He is one of my idols because Hitchcock would rehearse for a day and then shoot the next day. Each scene would run about eight or ten minutes and he'd do six or seven takes, I love that technique. We

David and Maddie fight it out as usual. This shot is an example of how split diffusion might be used; it would keep Bruce Willis sharp, while Cybill Shepherd receives the benefits of diffusion. **Inset:** Finnerman added to the period look of the famous Shakespeare episode through the use of coral filters and fog.





may not go through walls like he did, but I was a great lover of Hitchcock and I picked that style up from him. . . and brought that style to *Moonlighting*: you don't cut. I like to move the camera because I like to get flowing scenes."

A device often used by Finnerman is the Steadicam, a tool which, when attached to the operator, allows the camera to go wherever the operator does while the camera stays level via a system of intricate balances and shock absorbers.

"I feel the Steadicam is a great instrument. You can run up and down streets and stairs. . . and all you have to do is turn around and you have the remainder of the master." Despite his admiration for the tool, however, he still prefers a good old-fashioned dolly, for despite how talented the Steadicam operator may be, a certain amount of shakiness usually results. He even remembers an occasion where 150 feet of dolly track was laid down for a shot!

Another factor demonstrating his love for the moving camera is his distain for the zoom lens, something shared by many cinematographers. Not only does a zoom shot lack the energy of a good dolly-in, but the lenses are often large and cumbersome. This prevents the use of an ordinary matte box, which would not allow Finnerman to use the diffusion and filters he finds so useful.

"We never used a zoom lens on *Moonlighting*," he proudly confesses. "All prime lenses; and by using a prime lens, if you want to get in tight it forces you to crosslight, where if you use a zoom lens you can light way back and get the whole set with one nice, hot light and say, 'We're ready.' I don't work that way. I will purposely not put overhead lighting in anything. The only overhead lighting I did was in DiPesto's office [the Blue Moon reception area; done because the office lights obviously come from above]. Other than that, I will not burn an overhead chicken coop because it flattens everything out. Many guys do that. It's too easy."

Also interesting to note is *Moonlighting* uses all standard and long lenses. Finnerman has never (except once, which he regretted) used a wide angle lens, simply because that's the style he has chosen for the program. *Star Trek*, on the other hand, often made use of wide-angle lenses to make the planets appear larger.

Aside from the Steadicam, Finnerman also wishes he had some of today's other film technology way back when. "We've been doing things on *Moonlighting* which we weren't able to do on *Star Trek*," he explains. "Now we have the ultra speed lenses like the f/1.4, and the film, Eastman 5294, which you can rate anywhere you want. I've been rating it at 800 to 1000 [normally rated at an exposure index of 400] for my night stuff. I can go out with a little hand held light and a battery pack and walk for blocks. I just had a show in

which David Addison was following Mad-die Hayes and it was all shot (except for where he was) with available light. I shot it with 3 footcandles at 1.4 or 1.2 and it was just gorgeous."

His favorite camera and lens combination is the Arriflex BL IV and Zeiss, a team which has worked for him exceptionally well. "Zeiss lenses are the crispest, finest lenses in the world—something Panavision doesn't have, yet. I feel comfortable with the BL because I've won Emmy s with it. In the last 12 or 13 years, the majority of shows that have won the Emmy or an Oscar have been shot with Arriflex. I think it's a pretty good pair; we have not had 10 minutes of breakdown time in three seasons. I think that speaks for itself." Finnerman acknowledges that the Panaflex camera is in the same league as the Arri. "They are both excellent cameras; the choice is a personal preference."

Despite the quality of all *Moonlighting*'s episodes, Finnerman does confess to having a hands-down favorite: "The black-and-white episode. I was nominated for it. I shot it with Double-X and pushed it a stop (I rated it at 400). It will go down as a classic. . . as one of the few *film noirs* of TV. But it was very tough. I had never done a black and white show. I've worked on them as an assistant cameraman and operator, but the last black and white I worked on was *Virginia Wolf*. That goes back a lot of years. *Moonlighting* was the only black and white show I've ever done as a cinematographer.

"It was scary. I said to the producer, 'If you want to do this right, you better start thinking in black and white terms. First of all, you better start thinking about panchromatic makeup. There's not one set [already standing] that will work for me. You've got to go shades of grey, with black and a lot of shiny stuff.' And I didn't think they would do it but they said, 'Fine, just put down whatever you want and we'll do it.' They trust me."

The end result was certainly a masterpiece of television and took 16 days to shoot (more than twice as long as an average television episode), something few shows today would be allowed to get away with.

As a rule, *Moonlighting* episodes take longer to shoot (which is why there aren't as many new episodes per year as people would expect), but definitely not because of slackness on anyone's part. "We're scheduled for nine or ten day shoots," explains Finnerman, "But on the other hand, the other shows that are scheduled for six days go in with 55-page scripts. We go in with over 100-page scripts, so if we do ten pages a day for nine days that's only 90 pages. . . they [the producers] like to see dialogue at 30 seconds a page rather than a minute a page [the standard]. . . so the reason we go over is not because we don't do the work every day, it's the fact that the scripts are so large and so full.

"It's not been easy. We have to get the

PHOTO: © 1986 CAPITAL CITIES/ABC, INC.



Cybill Sheperd and Bruce Willis in "The Dream Sequence Always Rings Twice," the much-talked about black-and-white episode of *Moonlighting*. This episode is Finnerman's favorite.

shows on the air. We go to work at seven in the morning and work till eight at night—sometimes later. . . the whole point is that Glenn [Gordon Caron] and Jay [Daniel] are more interested in the product. Granted, we take longer, but any one of our shows at any point in time is better than the best that any other people put out." Something that *Moonlighting* fans heartily agree with.

Finnerman has enjoyed working on *Moonlighting*. He's proud to be part of the family that produces such a fine show and is happy to announce he'll be returning next season, not only as director of photography but as *director* of three episodes, a field he would enjoy getting more involved in. "Quite a number of great directors were once cameramen: Ronald Neame, Guy Green, George Stevens, Jack Cardiff, Freddie Francis, Nicholas Roeg, Rudolph Mate, etc. Where else would they get a better director than a cinematographer? He knows the techniques and the angles, I'm sure his relationships with the people would be excellent. I believe that the cinematographer is very qualified; maybe even moreso than people coming from other areas."

The veteran DP also sees a bright outlook in the business for aspiring cinematographers. "Cinematographers are desperately needed today. I see a couple of young cameramen today who have worked in the past for me and have done very well. I want to see what they're going to be like 10 years from now, like Bob Seaman, who does *L.A. Law*. He was my operator. I think he'll be dynamite in about five years. Bradford May [*The New Twilight Zone*] also. They keep improving with every show they do. I think the young blood coming in has a very, very good shot. There'll be a lot of guys retiring in our industry. Not me, because I'm just in my early 50's, but so many of them now that are in their 60s and 70s, that I think it's going to give a good shot to the young people coming in."

What other advice does Finnerman have for young talent? "Never stop knocking on doors, never stop trying, show enthusiasm and don't take no for an answer." And *that's* straight from the person without whom Captain Kirk nor David Addison would ever have seen the light.



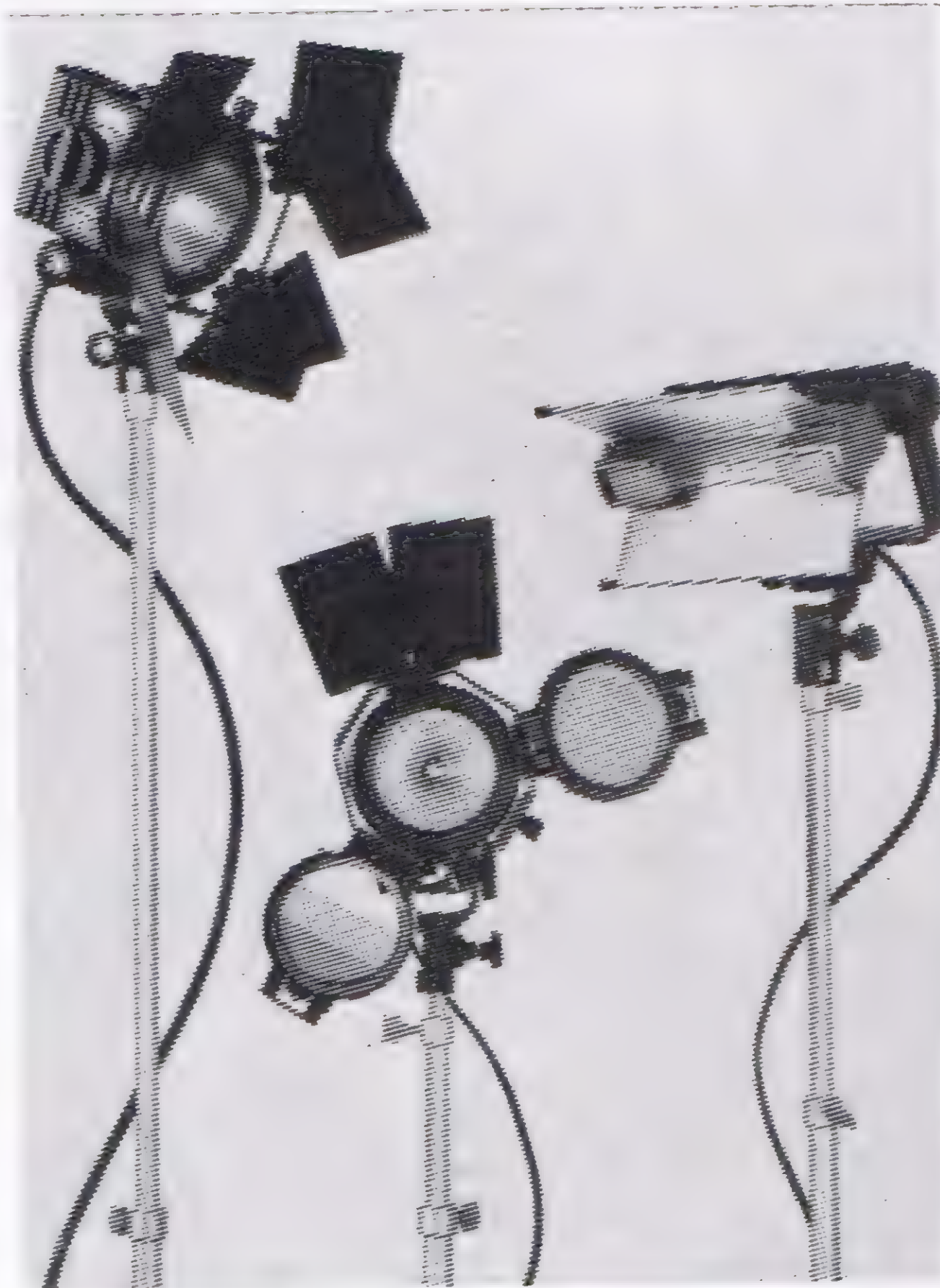
# GRIP KIT

## Lowel Light

Lowel's ViP System is both a practical and sophisticated system designed to take advantage of fast films, lenses and video cameras. ViP consists of three very small, highly compatible, professional lights. The ViP System also includes a wide range of unique light control and mounting components, most of which can be used interchangeably among the three fixtures. Many Tota-light and other Lowel accessories (already in the field) can also be used with the three ViP lights (described below).

**Lowel V-Light** The V-light is a broad, efficient 500 watt halogen source with a protective glass shield. It is bright enough to light a small room, small enough to fit in a large pocket.

**Lowel i-light** The tiny, focusing i-light uses an inexpensive 12 volt, 100 to 55 watt halogen lamp. Whether hand-held



or camera-mounted, it can provide that essential fill light, eye-light, highlight,

and contrast control, without overwhelming the available, natural light.

**Lowel Pro-light** The focusing Pro-light uses various voltage lamps: 250 watts, 120 volts; 200 watts, 30 volts; 100 watts, 12 volts. It has interchangeable special-purpose reflectors, unique barndoors, five swing-away accessories, plus a gel frame and umbrella. All of these components are shared with the i-light.

A distinguished collection of ViP and other existing Lowel accessories position all three lights on stands, on cameras, on walls, on doors, on sets, in hand, in seconds. This unprecedented component intergration provides maximum versatility and economy.

**Lowel ViP Kits** All ViP kits are usually compact and ideal for many video, film and still photography assignments ranging from basic to sophisticated, from soft to dramatic, from studio to remote locations.

## 8mm Video Hotline

The 8mm Video Council has announced the start-up of a new toll-free phone number for information concerning 8mm Video. The number, 1-800-VID-8-MIL (1-800-843-8645), will connect consumers, retailers, manufacturers, news media and other interested parties with the offices of the recently organized 8mm Video Council. In New York State, the phone number is 212-986-3978. "We set up the hot line to provide the public with the easiest and fastest access to information relating to 8mm Video," said Richard Quinlan, Chairman of the 8mm Video Council and National Sales Manager of Video Products for Aiwa America, Inc. "The Council's mandate is to help further awareness, understanding and acceptance of the 8mm Video System. The 800 number is simply a means towards fulfillment of that aim." The new toll-free number will be staffed on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., eastern time. All questions or requests will be handled by the 8mm Video Council or referred to an appropriate Council member. The current membership roster includes Eastman Kodak, Kyocera, Canon U.S.A., Aiwa, Sony, Embassy Home Entertainment, Warner Home Video, Paramount Home Video, Eastman Kodak Consumer Electronics Division, Eastman Kodak Motion Picture and Audio Visual Products, Sony Video Software and Sony Magnetic Tape. The 8mm Video Council is located at 99 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

## Super 8 In L.A.

Super8 Sound of Cambridge, MA has opened its branch office at 516 North Larchmont Blvd, Hollywood, CA 90004 (213) 462-6816. This expansion will firmly establish Super 8 as an integral part of the professional production community, offering continued diversity and choice to the varied needs of L.A. production groups.

The decision to expand to Hollywood is based on the growing demand by west coast producers for broadcast quality material that can be created within reasonable budgets. The sophistication of pro 8 hardware, coupled with the unmatched quality of Rank Cintel video transfers has made Super 8 a prime production choice among creators of music videos, films for the VCR market and special interest shows for cable-TV.

After 15 years of dedicated service in Cambridge, MA as the worldwide Super 8 experts, the growing demand for our experience by west coast producers and independents has made this decision to expand a particularly exciting one. It will allow us to serve our already large clientele in the L.A. area more completely, while giving the opportunity for new interested parties to see equipment and talk to our knowledgeable staff first hand. For more information contact us at either location:

Super8 Sound  
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## Transporter Cart

If you have a need to move a heavy 25 inch monitor and accompanying VCR equipment you need the super tough Video Transporter Cart Model 6000. It features a 48-inch high platform to hold the monitor so it is at the proper viewing angle for a seated audience. Other features include frame member made of 1" x 15 ga. (.065 wall) steel tubing mig-welded to 1/8" platform flanges at a 86° angle. When the 3/4" particle board platforms are bolted to the black-enameled frame, a stable pyramid is formed. The platforms have low pressure laminated surfaces and vinyl edge molding in a

neutral almond color. The four swivel casters with brakes are 5" in diameter with a 1/4" wide face. The casters are bolted through the bottom platform to the frame flanges. Three 9' x 1 1/4" polypropylene straps are provided to secure the load when transporting. The Model 6000 Transporter Cart has a load capacity of 250 pounds and size of upper platform is 32" x 24" x 48" high, center platform is 27" x 24" x 30" high and lower platform is 39" x 29" x 8" high and total weight is only 100 pounds. Retail price is \$295 each and available from WHEELIT, INC., P.O. Box 7350, Toledo, OH 43615, (800) 523-7508.



## Microphone Fishpole

The new lightweight (2 lbs.), yet solid Gitzo 563LM Reporter Fisher 5-section fishpole, in charcoal finish, with an outside diameter of one inch and two soft handgrips, has a range from 2½ to 10½ feet, for minimal vibration and noise.

The four black anodized extensions glide smoothly on two waterproof black resin washers and lock firmly on a third washer (no metal on metal), with soft cushioned locking rings, for easy, rapid, foolproof handling, without any slipping, jerking, binding—ever. A full three inches of all extensions remain in the next bigger tube for maximum solidity. The 3/8-1/4-inch reversible stell screw with small locking wheel and the 5/8-3/8-inch bushing at the end of the fishpole accept different microphones. Two holes, at the bottom and in the last section, accommodate the microphone cord.

Gitzo offers six other microphone fishpoles, with 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 sections extending up to 12 feet. Two of them are very compact, ranging from 1 1/4 foot to 4½ feet and from 1½ to 7 feet, fitting into briefcases, suitcases, etc. The longest fishpole extends from 2½ feet to 12 feet. As with all Gitzo tripods, monopods, heads, accessories, the virtually indestructible all-metal construction of the Reporter Fisher is covered by the Full Gitzo Warranty.



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# Epics of ANIMATION

By HOWARD GREEN

## Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

The Walt Disney classic  
of classics celebrates  
its 50th anniversary



Walt Disney ponders the seven little men, whose screen appearance helped revolutionize an industry. The decade of the 1930s at the Walt Disney Studios was an era of innovation and artistic accomplishment that has never been matched.

Once upon a time—fifty years ago to be exact—in the enchanted realm of Hollywood, a struggling young cartoon producer from the midwest had an impossible dream to make the first full-length animated feature and so he gathered the greatest artists and talents in the land. The result was *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The rest is history.

After more than half a century, *Snow White* is still the fairest of them all and one of the most popular motion pictures of all time. To date, worldwide grosses for the film total more than \$330 million. During its first three months of release alone, it is estimated that more than 20 million people flocked to see it. The movie remained the all-time box office champion until *Gone with the Wind* came along several years later.

The fame and popularity of *Snow White* has grown over the course of its numerous rereleases and this year, in celebration of its golden anniversary, it will become the first movie to be exhibited simultaneously in more than 60 countries (including the

United States, the USSR and China) and in more than 10 languages.

Audiences in 1937 felt a deep emotional attachment to *Snow White* and embraced the antics of her seven charismatic companions. For the first time two dimensional cartoon characters seemed real and alive with personality. Viewers were horrified by the queen-turned-witch and uplifted by the romantic storybook ending. They came away singing and humming such infectious tunes as "Whistle While You Work," "Heigh-Ho," and "Someday My Prince Will Come." Fifty years later the storytelling magic of Walt Disney and his animators continues to be just as potent, enthralling young and old alike.

Grimm's classic fairy tale provided the starting point for the fertile imagination of Disney and his team. Seven distinctly delightful personalities were created for the dwarfs and a talented teenager named Adriana Caselotti was called upon to sing and speak for the beautiful princess.

Other voices in the film were provided by Harry Stockwell (father of actors Dean





Snow White was able to name the dwarfs quite easily. The Disney artists struggled with Squinty, Fatty, Deafy and dozens of other names before the seven, now famous, names were derived.

and Guy Stockwell) as the Prince, Lucille LaVerne (*Orphans of the Storm*, *A Tale of Two Cities*) as the Queen/Witch, Moroni Olsen as the Queen's magic mirror, Pinto Colvig (famous as the voice of Goofy) as Sleepy and Grumpy, Otis Harlan as Happy, Scotty Matraw as Bashful and Roy Atwell as Doc. Veteran comedian Billy Gilbert, Hollywood's most famous sneezer, responded to an ad in *Variety* seeking the voice of Sneezy and was hired on the spot.

The story of how *Snow White* came to be made is one of the most fascinating in the annals of filmmaking. Hollywood expected the film to be a disaster, especially since no one had ever attempted a seven-reel cartoon before, and because production costs spiraled from the initial \$150,000 to a then-astronomical \$1.5 million. For the three years that the film was on the drawing boards (1934-1937),

Walt Disney and his brother Roy put up everything they owned as collateral. Hollywood tagged the production "Disney's Folly."

### Genesis Snow White

"The inspiration for *Snow White* goes back to Walt's boyhood in Kansas City," says Disney archivist David Smith. "The first motion picture that Walt remembered seeing was a silent version of the classic story in a remarkable arena theater with four screens." Walt Disney came to Hollywood in 1923 and began pioneering the field of motion pictures with the Mickey Mouse and Silly Symphony shorts.

In 1928, Mickey Mouse became Al Jolson's cartoon counterpart when the first words were uttered in "Steamboat Willie." The following year Disney premiered "The Skeleton Dance," the first



Animating human characters in believable situations was an enormous challenge for the Disney artists in the mid 1930s.

in a long line of Silly Symphonies that provided a testing ground for new ideas and techniques. Through these innovative cartoons he was able to experiment with color ("Flowers and Trees"), the integration of story, personality development

One of the sequences deleted in production was the bed making scene. Sleepy is carving one of the posts, when a fly starts buzzing around his head; a frenzied effort to swat the fly results in a perfectly carved rabbit on the bed post. Many such gags were storyboarded for the dwarfs, but most of them were deleted because they slowed down the story.





Many different models were suggested for Snow White—everything from a Betty Boop look-a-like to Zasu Pitts. Eventually, the sophisticated caricaturing was simplified into a much more innocent look.

and music ("Three Little Pigs"), the perceived dimensions of the multiplane camera ("The Old Mill") and refining a realistic human character ("The Goddess of Spring"). All of the above were necessary steps in preparing his team for the challenges that lay ahead.

Disney had been thinking about a feature-length cartoon for a long time. In the early thirties, he and Mary Pickford had discussed a production of "Alice In Wonderland" with herself in the title role and the rest of the cast drawn by Walt's artists. A similar project with Will Rogers in a version of "Rip Van Winkle" also fell by the wayside.

The idea to do a feature film was also an economic fact of life. The introduction of double-features during the 1930s was having the effect of squeezing Disney's cartoon "fillers" off the screen—victims of running time.

"One night in 1934," recalls veteran Disney art director and designer Ken Anderson, "we came back to the studio to work after dinner, and Walt called forty of us on to the small recording stage. We all sat in folding chairs, the lights went down, and Walt spent the next four hours telling us the story of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. He didn't just tell the story, he acted out each character, and when he got to the end he told us that was going to be our first feature. It was a shock to all of us because we knew how hard it was to do a cartoon short. He was doing something no other studio had ever attempted, but his excitement over *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* inspired us all."

Veteran animator Ollie Johnston was also present that evening. "It took guts to



The "Silly Song" sequence contrasts the dwarfs' playfulness and the innocent fun of Snow White with the evil queen, who is using her magic to disguise herself as an old crone.









**Above:** Snow White instructs the dwarfs to wash before supper, a task which is new to them. Dopey, in his enthusiasm swallows the soap. **Inset:** The light-hearted gags with the dwarfs serve as counterpoint to the tension between the evil queen and Snow White; the queen has instructed her huntsman to bring back Snow White's heart in this box.

do what Walt did," said Johnston. "The story is based on the idea that the queen is going to murder this girl. That's one drawing killing another drawing. Walt convinced us that this could be done so that it would be believable and we all believed him."

A training program for the artists was started informally at animator Art Babbitt's home and later moved to the studio when it became hugely popular. Don Graham, a renowned instructor from Chouinard Art Institute, became involved in the animators' training. He taught them how to make simple and direct statements that could communicate and say something. His action analysis classes with moving models proved quite helpful and, as a result, Snow White was able to

"Bunnies Give Fur" was the title for this deleted sequence in which the forest animals assist the dwarfs in making a bed for Snow White.



overcome the stiffness and awkward motions that plagued "The Goddess of Spring."

During the course of the production, live models were photographed for the animators to study so they might achieve realistic actions. Under the directorial coaching of animation supervisor Hamilton Lusk, Marjorie Belcher (who later became Marge Champion of the famous Marge and Gower Champion dance team) pantomimed the actions of Snow White while Louis Hightower stood in for the prince. Layout man Ken O'Connor was given the onerous task of tracing the live action directly off the Moviola. These tracings were then used as a loose guide by the animators. Proportions of figures and live action timing were altered to avoid the stilted, unreal look that direct copying would have created.

"You should have heard the howls of warning when we started making a full-length cartoon," Walt Disney recalled years later. "It was prophesized that nobody would sit through such a thing. But there was only one way we could do it successfully and that was to plunge ahead and go for broke—shoot the works. There

could be no compromising on money, talent or time . . . and this at a time when the whole country was in the midst of a crippling depression.

"As the budget climbed higher and higher, I began to have some doubts, too, wondering if we could ever get our investment back. Just at this critical period, a great showman named W.G. Van Schmus, general manager of Radio City Music Hall in New York, came to the studio and saw some bits and pieces we had finished. Right on the spot, he booked the picture—months before the film would be completed. It gave us all a terrific boost in morale.

"Then came a shocker. My brother Roy told me that we would have to borrow another quarter of a million dollars to finish the movie. I had to take those same bits and pieces to show the bankers as collateral and I was sure, being bankers, they wouldn't view the footage with the same vision Mr. Van Schmus did. I was plenty worried.

"On the appointed day, I sat alone with Joe Rosenberg of the Bank of America, watching those bits and pieces on a screen, trying to sell him a quarter of a million dollars worth of faith.

"After the lights came on, he didn't show the slightest reaction to what he'd just seen. He walked out of the projection



room, remarked that it was a nice day . . . and yawned! Then he turned to me and said, 'Walt, that picture will make a pot full of money.' Well, as everyone knows, we got the loan, the picture did make money, and if it hadn't, there wouldn't be any Disney Studio today."

Disney's Folly was soon to be known as Disney's Masterpiece.

### Background Statistics

Production on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* began in 1934 and was completed in 1937. More than 750 Disney artists worked on the film during those four years. Included were 32 animators, 102 assistants, 107 in-betweeners, 20 layout men, 25 background artists, 65 special effects animators and 158 professionals adept at inking and painting the cartoon figures on transparent celluloid sheets for reproduction by the Disney multiplane camera.

The movie is composed of more than 250,000 drawings with a musical background that was provided by an orchestra of 80 musicians. It has been estimated that at least one million drawings were made during the production of the film. The artists involved used enough pencils to keep Wall Street in business for a year!

The multiplane camera, invented and developed by technicians at the Walt Disney Studios, reached a high degree of perfection with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. The camera was designed to endow certain animated scenes with a three dimensional quality by photographing the cartoon characters working within painted backgrounds on several levels or planes of glass. Each plane may be lighted separately for effect, moved individually or jointly, closer to or farther from a camera lens, or at different speeds. It was initially used in a cartoon short, Walt

Disney's "The Old Mill" (1937), and both it and the short won separate Academy Awards.

It took months of research by studio chemists and the mixing of 1,500 paint colors and shades to determine the final hues to be used for painting characters and backgrounds in this color by Technicolor® film. All of the pigments used in the production were ground and mixed from special formulas within the Disney paint laboratory.

Last but not least, the ink-and-paint women devised their own unique method for making Snow White's face seem more natural. According to animator Frank Thomas, the women were unhappy with Snow White's ultra red cheeks and harsh hair line. They altered this by applying real rouge and other assorted makeup directly to cel. Walt conceded that it looked great but was concerned that they know exactly where to put it on each drawing. One of the inkers replied, "Mr. Disney, what do what do you think we've been doing all our lives?"

### Voice Search

Finding a suitable voice for the leading lady represented a major obstacle for Disney. Prior to *Snow White*, the studio had never required natural voices for its cartoon characters. Walt and his staff had worked only with visual and vocal caricatures. But *Snow White* was different. She had to have a specific kind of voice. She needed to sound ageless as well as friendly, natural and innocent. Walt insisted that the character have a completely universal voice.

More than 150 young girls auditioned for the part. They were identified only by number and Walt Disney listened to them sing and speak while he sat behind a screen. He preferred not to watch them, feeling that their physical appearance



Shirley Temple presents Walt Disney with a special Academy Award—seven little Oscars for *Snow White*.

might influence his judgement.

One hopeful was Deanna Durbin, just prior to her enormously successful screen career as a teenage star at Universal. Walt didn't choose her because he felt her voice, despite her youth, sounded too mature.

Adriana Caselotti, daughter of a well-known Los Angeles vocal coach, was a few years older than Deanna but sounded considerably younger and she won the assignment. Now, 50 years later, she is still indelibly linked with *Snow White*.

"I feel very blessed," she says. "Not everyone gets the chance to be part of a genuine classic like *Snow White*. And it's very exciting to hear songs like 'Some Day

(continued on page 66)

Layout artist Tom Wood sets the stage for a sequence with the dwarfs deciding how they can repay Snow White's kindness.



Fern Ahlstrand traces the animator's drawings onto a clear cel. After each cel is "inked," the colors are painted in on the back side of the cel.





# FESTIVALS

## Scientific and Technical Awards

Academy Awards for scientific or technical achievement were voted by the Academy Board of Governors based on the recommendations made by the Scientific or Technical Awards Committee. Joseph Westheimer is chairman of the committee.

Scientific or Technical Awards may be given for devices, methods, formulas, discoveries or inventions of special and outstanding value to the arts and sciences of motion pictures and employed in the motion picture industry during the awards year.

Awards may be granted in any of three classifications: Academy Award of Merit (statuette), for basic achievements which have a definite influence upon the advancement of the industry; Scientific and Engineering Award (Academy Plaque), for those achievements which exhibit a high level of engineering and are important to the progress of the industry; and Technical Achievement Award (Academy certificate), for those accomplishments which contribute to the progress of the industry.

### Academy Plaque

To Brian Ferren, Charles Harrison and Kenneth Wisner of Associates and Ferren for the concept and design of an advanced optical printer. The Associates and Ferren optical printer was designed with all axes under closed-loop computer control. The combination of speed, accuracy, range and program capability offers the motion picture industry a significantly improved and economical method for achieving the results previously performed in separate operations.

To Richard Benjamin Grant and Ron Grant of Auricle Control Systems for their invention of the Film Composer's Time Processor. The Auricle system was designed specifically for composers of motion picture music, enabling the artist to employ compositional techniques that were previously impossible when synchronizing music to the dramatic action. The Auricle saves time and increases accuracy by offering the composer greater flexibility for altering music, either at a remote terminal or on the recording stage, when variations in editing dictate changes in the accompanying score.

To Anthony D. Bruno and John L. Baptista of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Laboratories Incorporated and to Manfred G. Michelson and Bruce W. Keller of

Technical Film Systems, Incorporated, for the design and engineering of a Continuous Feed Printer. The Continuous Feed Printer is an improved method for high-speed (3,000 feet per minute) printing of motion picture films. Negatives are handled in roll form rather than in loops, thus eliminating the need for large elevators that were required previously, and orders of any length can be printed with a reduction in raw stock thread-up waste between prints.

To Professor Fritz Sennheiser of Sennheiser Electronic Corporation for the invention of an interference tube directional microphone. The Sennheiser microphone has a good directional characteristic obtained in a lightweight as well as a very reliable and rugged unit. The rejection of unwanted sounds and increased sensitivity has improved the quality of production sound tracks.

To William L. Fredrick and Hal Needham for the design and development of the Shotmaker Elite camera and crane. Combined in one vehicle are a generator, two camera cranes and an insert car with electronic drive and gasoline engine power. The Shotmaker reduces production costs as a single unit. It requires only one operator, while replacing three separate pieces of equipment, and it can be driven forward or backwards from the control cab, or remotely from the crane deck, with all of its six wheels steering. This capability, as well as its other features, enables the camera crew to photograph moving objects from angles that were very dangerous or difficult to achieve previously.

To Richard Edlund, Gene Whiteman, David Grafton, Mark West, Jerry Jeffress and Bob Wilcox of Boss Film Corporation for the design and development of a Zoom Aerial (ZAP) 65mm Optical Printer. The ZAP optical printer has the capability to change image size and to effect motion control on multiple elements with perfect registration and repeatability in complex optical composite photography. This printer incorporates the first true zoom lens developed for an optical printer, moving from reduction to enlargement, with distortion-free and aberration-free optics.

To Robert Greenberg, Joel Hynek and Eugene Mamut of R/Greenberg Associates, Incorporated, and to Dr. Alfred Thumin, Elan Lipschitz and Darryl A. Armour of the Oxberry Division of

Richmark Camera Service, Incorporated, for the design and development of the RGA/Oxberry Compu-Quad Special Effects Optical Printer. The Compu-Quad Optical Printer incorporates advanced computer control with servo technology and makes practical a new range of effects through an interface control system. Motion control, animation, computer-generated imagery and conventional techniques are combined to provide the motion picture industry with a powerful research and development tool for a new special effects methods and their production.

### Academy Certificate

To Lee Electric (Lighting) Limited for the design and development of an electronic, flicker-free, discharge lamp control system. The Lee Electric Discharge Lamp Control System overcomes disadvantages inherent with similar or conventional equipment available prior to its introduction to the motion picture industry. As a result, the cinematographer is able to select any shutter angle and photograph at any speed without flicker in the projected image.

To John L. Baptista of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Laboratories, Inc. for the development and installation of a computerized silver recovery operation. The process employed for extracting silver from laboratory chemicals at MGM Laboratories incorporates the use of a microprocessor to monitor the silver concentration in the solutions and automatically turn power to heavy-duty rotary cells on or off. The necessary level of silver is maintained while excessive amounts are retrieved and a printout informs laboratory personnel of the operation's efficiency. The control programming and electrical network represents an improvement over other systems currently in use.

To David W. Samuelson for the development of programs incorporated into a pocket computer for motion picture cinematographers, and to William B. Pollard for contributing new algorithms on which the programs are based. The Cinematographers' Computer Program uses a micro-computer to aid cinematographers and other film makers to predict the way a scene will look on the screen and to access many other parameters of the motion picture process.

To Hal Landaker and Alan Landaker of



The Burbank Studios for the development of the Beat System low-frequency cue track for motion picture production sound recording. The Beat System can be played on a set during production photography, while actor's dialogue or music is being recorded. The low-frequency beat is filtered out of the recording. As a consequence, there is no low-level music cross-talk in the production sound track.

To Peter D. Parks of Oxford Scientific Films' Image Quest Division for the development of a live aero-compositor for special effects photography. The O.S.F. Aerocomp makes it possible to photograph multiple images on different planes and in varying scales, combining them in one exposure, thus eliminating the need for post-production optical compositing.

To Matt Sweeney and Lucinda Strub for the development of an automatic capsule gun for simulating bullet hits for motion picture special effects. Various projectiles may be fired in an automatic or semi-automatic mode, at varying rates of fire, by means of a hand-held shuttle mechanism powered by compressed nitrogen. Valuable production time is saved with the elimination of elaborate preparations required with other methods and the action can be repeated on demand.

To Carl Holmes of Carl E. Holmes Company and to Alexander Bryce of The Burbank Studios for the development of a mobile DC power supply unit for motion picture production photography, in which 625 kilowatts are provided at 125 volts direct current from a portable trailer of moderate size. The unit is smaller and more efficient than earlier designs and offers improved reliability, flexibility and simplicity of control while reducing the cost of the DC energy supplied.

To Brian Ferren of Associates and Ferren for the development of a laser synchro-cue system for applications in the motion picture industry. By projecting a laser-generated reference mark into a

## A.S.C. Award

The American Society of Cinematographers was officially launched in January of 1919 when the State of California issued the group a charter. It is the oldest continuous film society in the world, and for the past 50 years has maintained its headquarters in the turn-of-the-century mansion at North Orange Drive and Franklin in Hollywood.

The history of the Society goes back to 1907 when early cameramen were traveling back and forth from New York to Los Angeles to utilize the best climates for making movies.

Cameramen on both coasts would meet socially in each others' homes and eventually the idea of a club for the interchange of ideas and technology became a reality—on both coasts. In New York in 1913, the Cinema Camera Club began and in Los Angeles, the Static Club was formed. By 1916, the two clubs disbanded after heroic efforts to keep them going did not work. Hollywood cinematographers, most of them from that early club, realized that the need for an organization was vital for progress and learning in their chosen art. Therefore, once again the attempt was made to form a group—The ASC—and it now encompasses members from all over the world and serves as a center for the export of excellence in craft and artistry in the motion picture field. Membership in the ASC is possible by invitation only and is extended to directors of photography with distinguished credits in the industry.

The Society publishes American Cinematographer magazine which is distributed to 93 countries of the world. It also has recently brought forth the Sixth edition of American Cinematographer Manual, a textbook of movie making information in use in the industry for many years.

The first ASC screen credit was given to charter member Joseph August when he



photographed a William S. Hart picture in 1919. That same year, Mary Pickford had the initials, ASC, lettered after Charles Rosher's name on her credit titles. Since that time, those letters have become symbolic of excellence in the motion picture industry.

scene during the interval when the camera shutter is closed, actors and animatronic characters can be positioned precisely with the synchro-cue system, as well as verifying the positioning accuracy of portable motion picture cameras.

### Medal of Commendation

To E.M. (Al) Lewis in appreciation for outstanding service and dedication in upholding the high standards of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

## Great Cinematographers, 1986

**A**re there common denominators for defining great cinematography? One thing is certain, great cinematography never draws attention to itself. The cinematographer's job is to interpret the intentions of the writer and director by providing an appropriate visual perspective.

In part, it's a matter of establishing a "look." The "look" sets the tone for telling a story on film. Are we talking about the harsh reality of *Platoon*, where director Oliver Stone wants the audience to feel the paranoia—in the guts—of being a foot soldier in a foreign jungle? That was his

charge to cinematographer Bob Richardson. Or, are we talking about a fantasy like *Peggy Sue Got Married*, where Francis Ford Coppola wants the audience to suspend its natural disbelief and accept an exceptional reality? That was just one of the challenges for director of photography Jordan Cronenweth, ASC.

Great cinematographers also have the ability to create the illusion of time and place. In *The Mission*, Chris Menges, BSC, transports audiences to the primitive jungles of South America centuries back in time. In *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, Don Peterman, ASC, creates a believable setting aboard an

alien spaceship projected centuries into the future. In *A Room With a View*, Tony Pierce-Roberts, BSC, utilizes practical, present-day locations in Florence, Italy and near Kent, England, where the story is staged. But he created the look and the feel of another period.

Cronenweth, Menges, Peterman, Pierce-Roberts and Richardson are 1986 nominees for an Academy Award for cinematography. They are also recipients of the 1986 Kodak Outstanding Photographic Achievement Awards. Menges won an Oscar in 1984 for *The Killing Fields*. This is his second nomination. It's also Peterman's second nomination.



The first was in 1983 for *Flashdance*.

It surprised many people familiar with Cronenweth's body of work, when they learned that *Peggy Sue* is his first Oscar nomination. Pierce-Roberts and Richardson, also first-time nominees, are at comparatively early points in their theatrical filmmaking careers.

The five pictures which earned these cinematographers 1986 Oscar nominations couldn't be more diverse in subject matter, look or photographic style. However, a common denominator is the absence or limited use of key light as a source of illumination for exposure in many critical scenes. All of the nominees made exceptional use of natural and artificial source light.

### "The Mission"

Chris Menges, BSC, was born near London, where his father was the musical director for the old Vic Theatre. Very early in life, Menges heard the tune of a different drummer. "I was always fascinated with cameras and photography," he said. In 1958, at the age of 17, Menges started an apprenticeship with American filmmaker Alan Forbes.

By 1963, Menges was shooting a weekly TV documentary. Before his 30th birthday, he filmed his first theatrical feature, *KES*, which is still among his personal favorites. Other earlier features included *Bloody Kids* and *After a Lifetime*, real-life dramas that drew on his documentary experience.

Another pivotal experience was the five months he spent working on *The Empire Strikes Back*. Also high on his list of per-



Rich in atmosphere, several South American locations were used for *The Mission*.

sonal highlights were a number of documentaries, *East 103rd Street* and *Opium War Lords*. He spent 18 months in the jungles of Burma and Vietnam shooting the latter. Director Roland Joffe took note when he was planning *The Killing Fields*. It was exactly the look that he wanted.

*The Killing Fields* earned Menges a 1984 Oscar. His second nomination in three years is for another Joffe film, *The Mission*. Menges again was able to draw upon experience, this time from a 1968 television film, *The Tribe that Hides from Man*, which he shot in the jungles of South America with director Adrian Cowell.

*The Mission* is staged in a border area between Spanish and Portuguese territories in 18th century South America. Jesuit priests have settled once savage Guarani Indians in a series of missions built above a waterfall beyond the reach of colonists. Now, the Jesuits are being told the Indians must leave the missions and return to the jungle.

Jeremy Irons and Robert DeNiro, respectively, play the parts of a Jesuit priest and a one-time mercenary-turned-friend of the Indians. The film was shot in mainly rugged conditions near Iguazu Falls in Argentina; in Cartagena, a 16th

Soft lighting suggesting hazy, sunshine was utilized by Menges. **Below:** The rugged Iguazu Falls in Argentina was a spectacular location.

century city in Colombia; and at Santa Marta in Colombia.

Menges prepared to shoot *The Mission* by studying the works of period Spanish painters to learn about the color, intensity and angles of light produced by oil lamps of that period. Joffe was determined to capture the scope of the story and setting. This dictated use of wide anamorphic lenses.

Joffe also likes working with two cameras in tandem to increase coverage. This was among the factors dictating Menges' approach to shooting *The Mission*. For exteriors, he made maximum use of natural light, though volatile cloud cover made that difficult to predict. In a number of jungle sequences, Joffe envisioned the air being thick with a white steamy mist.

Unfortunately, it wasn't the setting that nature provided, so Menges used several water pumps to generate a fine spray of vaporized water that reflected beams of sunshine falling in random patterns of light and shadows through the thick tree cover.

There are wonderful dramatic sequences filmed in the interior of a mission in a 16th century walled city. Menges used rows upon rows of lights, all bounced for a softer, more natural look, combined with green and yellow filters. This created a warm texture resembling the look of the oil lamps and candles used during the period.

Most of *The Mission* is recorded on Eastman's medium-speed 5247 film. In situations where Menges needed a "faster" film for depth-of-field, he generally chose the Agfa 320 emulsion. In his most recent theatrical feature, *Shy People*, Menges became one of the first directors of photography to make extensive use of the new Eastman color high speed daylight negative film 5297.

Is cinematography a craft or an art?

Menges replied, "It's really a question of being able to capture the moment and record it on film." In *The Mission*, he captured one moment after another and the images came together to tell a compelling story.





## "Star Trek IV"

Don Peterman, ASC, grew up in Los Angeles. A neighbor and family friend, special-effects cameraman Roy Seawright, had a powerful influence on his youth. Seawright got Peterman started in photography as a hobby. A tour of duty with the U.S. Signal Corps as a cameraman started him thinking about cinematography as a life's work.

Peterman started his career as a film loader at Roach Studios. He did both animation and title work before moving into production. While Peterman was still in his late 20s, Chuck Wheeler, ASC, took him on as his operator for a 3-D feature film. Later, Peterman worked as Bob Spark's operator on the *Lassie* series. He called this "a great experience because there were 30 to 40 setups a day, and half were hand-held."

During the early 1970s, Peterman was in the new wave of cinematographers, who changed the look of TV commercials by shooting them like fashion photography, using softer light and longer lenses. Ultimately, that look was translated to theatrical features.

Peterman shot his first feature film, *When a Stranger Calls*, in 1978. It was a \$2 million Mel Simon picture. His first big-budget film was *Rich and Famous* with legendary director George Cukor. In addition to *Flashdance* and *Star Trek IV*, Peterman's quickly expanding body of work includes *Splash*, *Cocoon* and *American Flyer*.

*Star Trek IV* was an interesting challenge because the audience included legions of loyal fans who have been following the adventure of the Enterprise crew for more than 20 years. For the fourth movie in the series, director Leonard Nimoy had a different look in mind. The crew would be returning to Earth in a captured Klingon starship.

Nimoy and Peterman, along with production designer Jack Collis (who had worked with Peterman on *Splash* and *Cocoon*), collaborated to draw a mental picture of the Klingon ship's interior. It was totally alien, characterized by dull olive



Peterman balanced light from large displays with illuminated table surfaces.

brown tones, dimly lit and dirty. To create that illusion, Peterman created soft light sources with a lot of help and ingenuity from Collis. Small lights were hidden behind all consoles in the control room. Then, the panels on the consoles were replaced with quarter-inch-thick milkglass that diffused the light and created a soft, alien glow.

Instrument displays were on dimmers, which gave Peterman precise control of intensity. The ceiling of the cabin was only 6½ feet high, but Peterman was able to open some panels and use them for lighting. All the walls were wild, which allowed him to selectively direct some very soft, bounce fill light from behind the set.

There was never any direct light used during the 14 or 15 days Peterman shot on that crucial set. However, smoke was frequently used to diffuse the ambient light, and to create streaks of light coming from the sources.

The picture was shot in anamorphic format with a Panaflex Gold camera. "I shot everything at stop T-2.5 or T-2.8 because you go below that in anamorphic format the focus on the sides of the frame tends to drift," he said.

However, even with all of the smoke and dim light, the rich blacks still punched right through. Peterman desired that look greatly. He wanted gray tones and low contrast without sacrificing rich blacks. That was crucial for the image he was painting.

Peterman used the Eastman high speed 5294 film for all interiors and light exteriors. He worked at a comparatively high print light. Then, producer Ralph Winter had the lab overexpose the interpositive which helped retain the blacks on release prints.

You think of all of the small details that result in a unique series of images on a wide screen, and as you watch the audience soak up the environment of a Klingon ship, you have to ask, has there ever been an art that touches people like this?



**Right:** Instrument panels were used to illuminate actor's faces. **Below:** The Paramount outdoor tank was shaded from the sun and the natural skylight was softened with a large scrim.







### "Peggy Sue"

Jordan Cronenweth, ASC, is a native of Los Angeles. His first exposure to photography was at the side of his father, a skilled portrait photographer, where he learned to expose images a frame at a time.

Cronenweth started his career in the camera department of a major studio. Early on, he worked as a camera assistant to Conrad Hall, ASC, and later as Hall's operator. He has been a director of photography since 1970. Notable early credits include *Nickel Ride*, *Play It As It Lays*, *Zandy's Bride* and *The Front Page*. Personal favorites from his body of work include *Cutter's Way*, *Altered States* and *Blade Runner*; and now, add *Peggy Sue Got Married* to that list.

Cronenweth credits director Francis Ford Coppola with providing him the creative latitude to craft a believable fantasy on film. The leads are played by Kathleen Turner and Nicolas Cage. Turner plays Peggy Sue and Cage is both her 18-year-old boyfriend and husband of 25 years.

The film is set in two periods. It opens with Peggy Sue preparing to attend her 25th high school class reunion. She is disenchanted with both her life and estranged husband. Peggy Sue faints at the reunion, and when she awakens she is 18 years old and it's the early 1960s again.

How many people get a second chance? It's something that everyone fantasizes about. However, the challenge is getting the audience to suspend its



Low-key lighting was used to emphasize a natural, moody quality in *Peggy Sue*. Lights were placed at interesting angles to suggest illumination from windows and other natural sources. Cronenweth's background in portrait photography was put to good use in these situations.

disbelief and accept the premise. There's a pivotal scene that occurs in the cellar of the home of Peggy Sue's parents.

It's a moody scene played by Turner and Cage. Peggy Sue is trying to grasp the reality of being 18 years old again, and starts realizing, he has a chance to change her future. She confronts her 18-year-old boyfriend with things he's going to do in the future, and of course, he's confused.

The scene actually was shot in a cellar with the only source of light coming from a small window high on the wall. Cronenweth lit the scene almost entirely with a thin shaft of light angled through the window, augmented only by very small amounts of fill light.

He and Coppola collaborated in using

the absence of light to establish the mood and make the audience feel the scene. Coppola choreographed the action around the thin shaft of light by moving the two actors in and out of the shadows.

By getting the audience to accept that scene, the premise became acceptable and the audience could identify with the story. Throughout the filming of *Peggy Sue Got Married*, Cronenweth used the angle and quality of light, natural and artificial, to create a sense of time and place, mood and setting.

Even in extreme low-key situations, filmed with 20 to 25 footcandles of key light and minimal to little fill, Cronenweth used Eastman's medium-speed 5247 film. He wanted to use the film's unique

(continued on page 64)



FURTHER

# ADVENTURES of a PRODUCTION ASSISTANT!!

## “Staying in the Business”

By REX A. PIANO

One of the most vivid memories I have about working on my first movie was the pep-talk given to the entire crew by the producer and director the day before shooting was to start.

Everyone was seated in our office, on chairs, the floor, and even on the Formica tongue-desks; the motliest bunch you've ever seen. The producer, his head hanging in the middle of his chest looking like a vulture roosting, paced back and forth in front of us as he smoked his pipe, filling us in on the “Do's and Don'ts” of low budget filmmaking.

“Now listen, if youse got any questions about the equipment, ask before you touch it. The last thing we need is to lose or break equipment because youse don't know how to use it!”

Truer words have never been spoken. That first day we lost, broke, dented and destroyed enough equipment to shoot another low budget movie on.

It all started when we tied six sheets of foam-core—4' by 8' pieces of foam used to reflect light—to the roof of our van. No one ever said not to use slip-knots. While we were driving to location they blew off and hit the production van behind us; blinding the driver. Since he couldn't see, the van immediately drove off the road and smashed into a tree. The windshield shattered, hampers full of equipment slid forward squishing passengers, lightbulbs burst, and grip stands bent; needless to say, the PA driving was given the first ticket back to New York.

The rest of the shoot went about as well as that first day; cars were constantly getting hit, and PA's were constantly losing and breaking equipment, and then getting bus tickets back to NYC. One night when we were shooting, I grabbed a metal rod off of the dolly and was using it to poke through garbage, undoubtedly trying to find a misplaced piece of equipment. . . . Anyway, when I was done I just threw the pole away. I mean, hell, what could it have been for, right?

Well, it just so happens that I threw out an extension rod the dolly needed in order to support the extra foot pads. The key

grip, a man who didn't even have a real name but was called “DOG,” freaked out! “Where the hell is that \$•?!! extension rod?”

Needless to say, I kept my mouth shut. This guy was huge and would have eaten me alive—and the producer would have loved to film that, I'm sure. I secretly searched the woods, but never found the piece, and to this day, the producers don't know it was me that lost the extension rod, otherwise I would've had the next ticket out.

It was at that time that I decided to go into the Production side of filmmaking as opposed to the Crew side. However, before I could do that I still had a lot to learn.

The fall of my senior year at college, I took a job working for a film company that was about to release its latest slice'em and dice'em picture. My job title was regional Publicity Director. That meant that I was in charge of everyone spray painting stencils on the streets, curbs, and walls of New York City, advertising the opening of the movie. One of the PA's fathers owned a die cutting shop and said he would make the stencils for free. Great! We gave him the design and the dimensions of our stencil and plotted our course of action.

The designated night arrived and so did our stencils. Unfortunately, somewhere along the line, communication got fouled up and instead of being 8" by 11" stencils, they were 24" by 40" stencils—they were the size of small tables! But it was too late, we had to use them. It was like in *The March of the Wooden Soldiers*, when Laurel and Hardy get the order wrong.

I had four two-man crews, each assigned to a twenty block section of the city. Our task was to make sure everyone in Manhattan knew that Mr. 38 was opening the following Friday. We'd start each night at 2:00 and work until our sections were complete: the stencil painted on every corner of every crosswalk; usually till dawn. It took us three nights to do all of midtown and we were about to start on lower Manhattan when the cops busted

us. Luckily, no one was thrown in jail, they just confiscated our spray paint and threatened us with a night at Rikers. I remember calling the producer, and waking her up.

“Helloooooo . . . .”

I heard her droning voice stuttering into the phone. She was probably finally getting her first decent night sleep in months and here I was disturbing her.

“Ruby, it's me, Rex. We just got busted by the cops.”

I looked at the cop. He was reading the stencil and seemed interested in the movie.

“Oh? Well, call me in the morning and I'll send over some bail money. . . .”  
CLICK . . . BUZZ . . .

She'd hung up on me. I told the cop what happened and he asked me why I was doing this.

“To work in the film business!” I told him.

He asked me how much I was getting paid to spend my evenings defacing the fine city of New York.



ART: MURAD GUMEN



"Nothing . . . I get a one-sheet for doing this."

He must have realized how pathetic my plight was, because he just told me to get lost and not do it again. I smiled and thanked him; waited for him to leave and started painting the streets again. I was dedicated and besides, I wanted that poster! That was the last time I got nailed by the cops, but not the last time I spent nights spray painting sidewalks or hanging movie posters all over NYC for some low-budget movie.

My big break in the production side came in the spring of my senior year when I was hired to be the first assistant director on a movie. It was the greatest thing that could have happened. I took the last semester as independent study and started working on a *big* low budget film; one that wouldn't open until four years after it was shot, and then would only play for three days; but I didn't know that when I started the job.

From day one, it was insanity. Sixteen hour days, seven days a week, and we were just in pre-production. Once shooting started, it seems everything was intensified. No more sixteen hour days, seven days a week . . . Now they were thirty-two hour days, fourteen days a week; but it was

fun. We were breaking the cardinal sin of low budget production: "Never shoot all exteriors, with children, or with animals." Our movie was about children and animals, and they lived in the wilderness. The antics that went on behind the camera were just as funny, if not funnier, than those happening in front of the lens.

One of the PA's kept bugging me to let him drive a production van. Every day: "Let me drive! Let me drive!" Finally, I gave in and let him drive. For someone with no driver's license, he was doing fine until he came to the tunnel. No one knew he was claustrophobic, but we soon found out. He flipped out. He started scraping the van against the walls of the tunnel and couldn't stop. We were like a letter being dropped down a mail chute, bouncing from side to side. Thank God it was a short tunnel. Needless to say, he didn't do much more driving after that incident. The amazing thing is, he didn't get a bus ticket back to the city either.

A favorite set pastime was "Sand-bagging." When someone falls asleep on the set, which invariably happens every hour or so, you tie sand bags, each weighing fifty pounds, all over him. Once the last sand bag is secured, the entire crew stands around him and yells his name. The victim usually tries to jump to his feet, ready to go to work; but instead just flops about until he realizes what's happened to him.

Seven months, four destroyed vans, two burned-out cameras, three broken legs, and a dozen wasted PA's later, we finished shooting. I had, once again, survived. It was the wrap party that got me—while dancing, I fell and broke my knee.

Now that I was an AD, I thought I had the world by the take-up reels. I got a job ADing one of the first "Rap" movies ever made and immediately started going crazy again. When I first met the producer of the film, whose cast and crew was 95% black, his only words to me were, "Wear dark glasses; your eyes will bug'em out."

Apparently, he thought my blue eyes would bother everyone in the movie and on the set, so for the rest of the shoot, day or night, I had to wear sunglasses; the crew probably thought I was blind.

We were shooting up in the South Bronx and had several close calls with death. The first occurred while we were filming a poignant dialogue scene between the two leads. The sun was setting behind the Manhattan skyline, the rush of the IRT subway in the background filled the air and our two lovers looked bleary-eyed at each other. It was a perfect setting for a romantic scene until *they* attacked us. In the middle of a very, very long take, a brick and some rotted mortar fell from the roof of the building onto the terrace where we were shooting. No one paid any attention; it was an old building, a windy day, etc. Then more bricks fell, and their targets, our actors, were starting to worry. I looked up and saw a few heads disappear behind the roof.

"Okay, let's get this scene finished and move on. It looks like it's starting to rain...."

The snipers must have heard me, because as soon as I finished, a barrage of bricks, stones, and metal objects pelted us and our equipment from above.

"Run away!!"

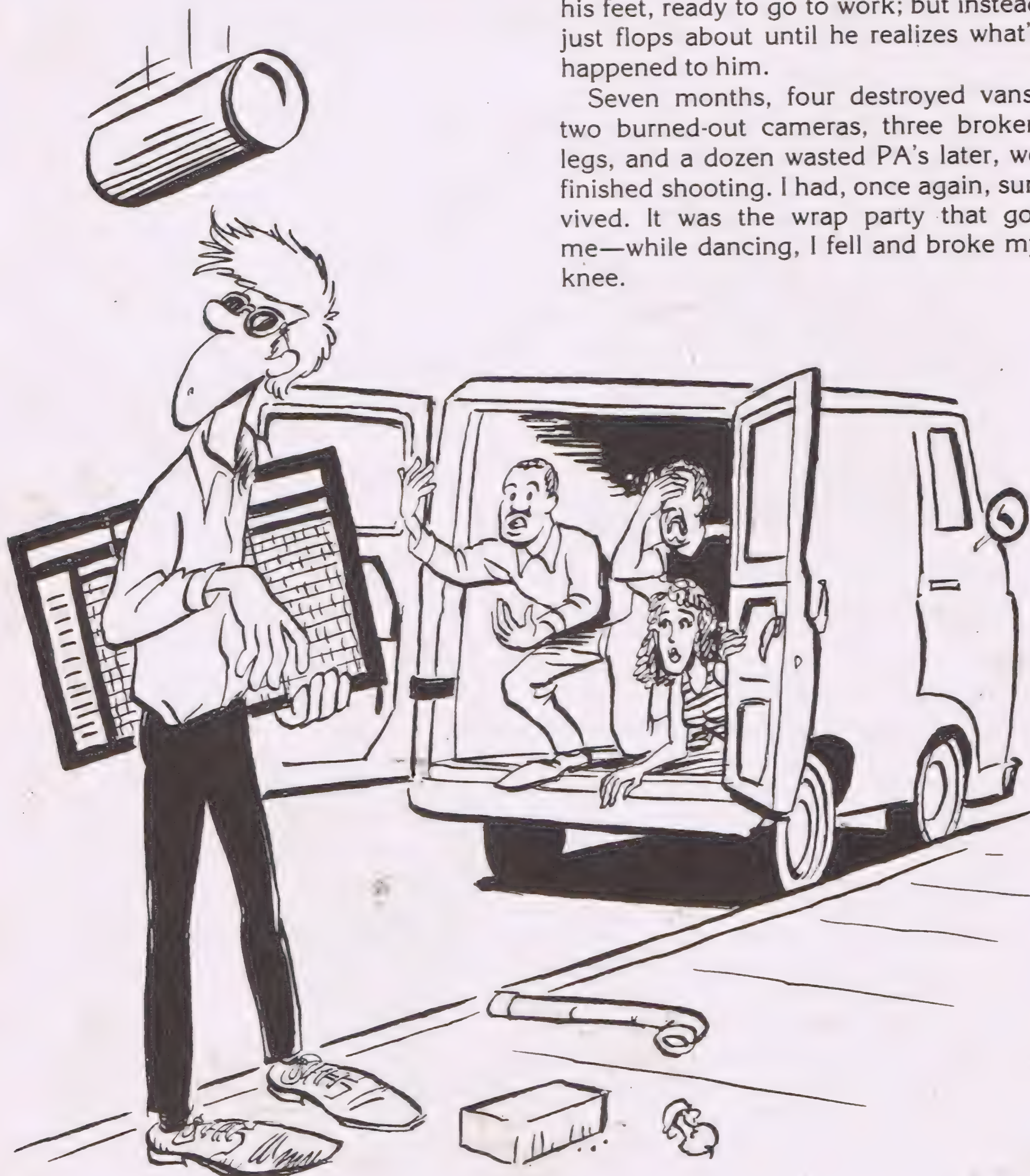
Everyone picked up whatever they could carry and we took off for the van, under siege all the way. Once inside, I revved up the van and was about to drive away when I saw it—my production board—lying on the terrace. No one had taken it. I looked at the crew, each one checking themselves for bruises, and said in my best Clint Eastwood imitation, "Cover me!"

I took off out of the van, serpentine style, and made it to the terrace unharmed. I grabbed my production board and was running back when I heard...

"Look out!"

I stopped (a very stupid thing to do) and looked up and saw heading straight for me, a motorcycle gas tank. Boom! I was hit. Luckily, it wasn't full. I got up limping, and ran for the production vehicle. I jumped in, threw it into gear, when Crash!—a brick hit the windshield, shattering it. We took off, speeding through the projects, safe at last.

My next brush with death happened one night at about 4:00 a.m. when we were shooting in a nightclub right around the corner from "Fort Apache." There had been warnings about a Shotgun Robber terrorizing the South Bronx, but no one really believed it or cared—not until he showed up at our location. I was inside filming, and we needed a piece of equip-







ment from the van, so I ran out to get it. When I reached for the door and found it unlocked, a bell should have gone off in my head; something should have told me "Do not open this door!" but did it? Noooooooo.

I opened the door and found myself staring down two barrels of a shotgun, with a very angry man on the other side, his fingers poised on the trigger. What do you say to someone like that? Being the perceptive person I am, I yelled, "What the hell do you think you're doing in our van?!" Big mistake. He didn't answer, all I heard was the "click" of the gun's safety going off.

By this time, I had been off the set for a few minutes and someone from the crew came out and discovered I had made a new friend.

"Yo, Rex. What's taking you so long?" Then he saw the reason and stopped, dead in his tracks.

"Holy shit! Jimmy, that you?"

"Yeah, Freddy, that you?"

They knew each other. In fact, they were friends and had gone to school together and still hung out with the same people. I had been saved once again. As it turned out, the guy helped us with the rest of the shoot, and a week later tried to sell us back some of the equipment he had stolen.

Since I now had a working knowledge of weapons, my next job was that of prop-man armorer for a vigilante movie. I was in charge of all the guns. I got my special theatrical weapons license and set out to learn everything I could about pistols, rifles, you name it.

All of the weapons were locked in a safe when we weren't shooting and I would transport them to the set in a locked prop-case mounted on wheels. We were shooting at all hours and I wasn't getting much sleep, something synonymous with film production, and one morning I forgot to bring the weapons to the set. . . and it was the day of the big shoot-out! Oops! Well, I told the AD the problem and he almost dropped dead right there. I was anticipating the unemployment lines, when he told me not to worry. They had other

scenes to shoot first and to just get in the van and get those guns and get back here as fast as I could or else! Once again I was saved.

There were two more incidents that almost got me fired on that shoot. We were filming a very tense scene in a closed set, and I was sitting in a chair, sleeping. In fact I was dreaming, and it must have been a nightmare. The Director called "Quiet! Roll sound. Action!" The actors started emoting, the scene was building, it was almost at its pinnacle when . . .

I screamed! I woke up and fell out of my chair. I blew the entire take; I felt like an idiot. Every face turned and looked at me, I smiled weakly and quickly left the set.

The last incident occurred one night while we were shooting an effects scene. The Mob Leader was going to be shot by our Star with a shot gun. His body would be yanked back against all of these crates, and blood was to go everywhere. It took about five hours to set the whole thing up and we had four cameras covering the action, three on highspeed slow-motion.

Now before I go on, let me preface this by exposing one thing about the Star. . . he hated my guts. He had done all sorts of exploitation films, had been a professional athlete, and was always in magazines, and on TV and expected everyone to treat him with the utmost respect. It's not that I didn't respect him, I just wouldn't bow down at his every pass. However, he was perfect for the part, and I can understand why he got pissed off at me.

Everything was ready to shoot. I loaded the rifle with two rounds of half-load blank ammunition; when this gun was fired, a four-foot flame would shoot out the end. I went over with him how to fire it, etc. The special effects crew was ready. The camera crew was ready; sound was ready. The "Mob Leader," now wired with a dozen squibs and attached to a cable that would jerk him into the crates, was ready. Everyone was tense. The Director called "Quiet. Roll cameras 1, 2, 3, 4. . . Action!"

The Star ran into frame, screamed his lines, and pulled the trigger. . . but nothing happened.

The AD started screaming "Cut! Cut! Cut!"

No one on the set moved. FX men ran in and made sure the Mob Leader didn't

move. Then everyone turned and looked at me. The Star, fuming, spat his words out at me through clenched teeth.

"Why didn't it work?"

All eyes were on me. Pressure. Tension. I didn't know why the gun didn't work. Then it came to me. I stepped towards him. Everyone was silent, waiting to hear my explanation.

"Did you pull the trigger?" I asked.

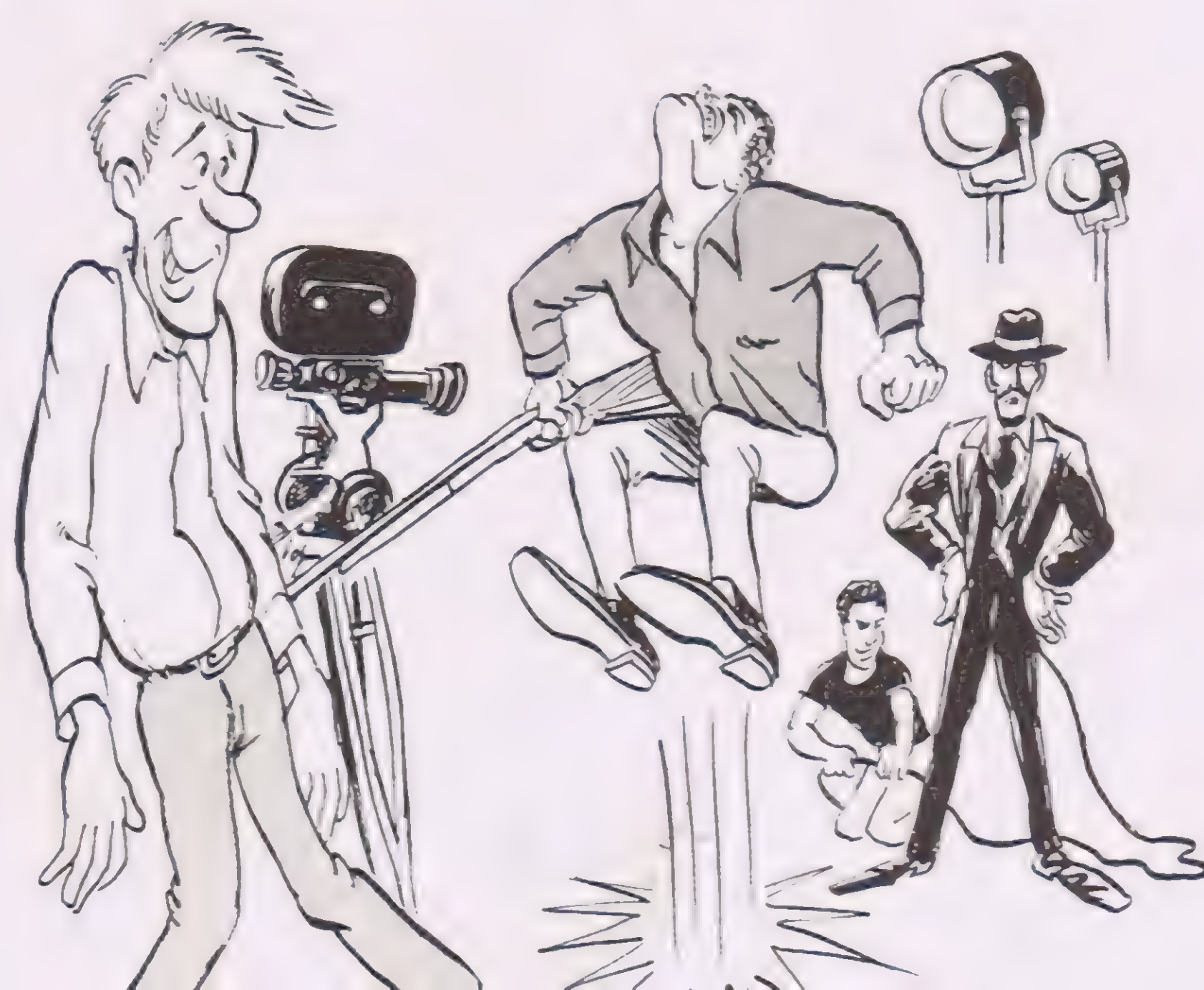
Definitely the wrong thing to say. He went ape-shit on me, Lambasting in front of the whole crew, who now were laughing because I just asked this guy if he pulled the trigger or not. As it turned out, I had left the safety on. We did another take and it worked beautifully. I thought I would never get another job, but the Star asked me to work on his next action film. Unfortunately, I couldn't do it, I was working on another project.

Everyone who has ever worked on a film or a commercial has experienced these kinds of mishaps. Screwing up a take, here and there. Forgetting to call this person or that person. You learn from your mistakes. And each day, as I work on different projects, I learn a little more about filmmaking and about surviving and staying in the film business. I've made plenty of mistakes, and I'm sure I'll make plenty more, but that's life.

When you do make a mistake, own up to it. It's better to take the responsibility for something you've done, than to cover it up because it undoubtedly comes back to haunt you. I've mentioned a few instances in which I shrugged my responsibilities, and said I didn't know what happened; everybody does it. But the only way to succeed in this business is to be honest and responsible.

Producers might yell at you. Directors, actors, everyone yells at you, and you do have to learn from your mistakes and not make the same ones over again, or else you will be out of a job. But you've got to remember not to let this sway your decision about making movies, because the guy who just yelled at you made the same mistake when he was starting out, and if he tells you he didn't, then he's a liar.

Getting in the film business is no easy task. It takes a lot of determination, long hours, hard work and a lot of luck. But staying in the film business is even tougher.





# Animation ARCHIVE

By PAUL MANDELL

## *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*

*The story behind the monster  
that ate Coney Island.*



**1** 953 was a strange and alarming year. McCarthyism reared its ugly head—witch-hunts ushered in mass paranoia. Cold War and Red Scare became national buzz words, but George Reeves as Superman vowed to fight the never-ending battle for truth, justice and the American way, while Speedy Alka-Seltzer promised to combat stomach upset. Bomb shelters were sprouting on the landscape of Middle America, and radiation burn victims were still news items in *Life* magazine. People saw a live A-bomb blast from Yucca Flats on the 12-inch RCA. Red Buttons was singing “Strange Things Are Happening” on vacuum tube radios. And, if that weren’t enough, a dinosaur crawled out of the East River, spread havoc on Wall Street, and promptly turned Coney Island into a blazing inferno. Brooklynites would think twice about taking that roller-coaster ride again, and the Hollywood

film community had trouble deciding who (or what) was the deadlier monster—the Rhedosaur or the Senator from Wisconsin. Few, however, could question which one was the livelier beast.

*The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* brought Willis O’Brien’s *The Lost World* into the Atomic Age and gave Ray Harryhausen his first solo credit for Technical Effects. The bits of business he created watermarked many of his later efforts—the crocodilian jaw snapping and reptilian eye blinking in the Manhattan canyons, the quick gulp as it made an *hors d’oeuvre* out of a not-so-bright cop, the nonchalant swat of a crushed car, the drama of the creature’s demise. Essentially, what Harryhausen had learned to do was choreograph O’Brien’s work, refining the brisk energy of the stunned Bronto in *The Lost World* into a style he made his own. The death scene of Ray’s Beast, as it circles its own tail and collapses in

The Beast terrifies Wall Street via Harryhausen’s split-screen Dynamation process. Pedestrians run flawlessly through an invisible matte line.

agony, combined an uncanny feel for quadruped movement with pathos and ballet.

But the strength of *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* goes beyond Harryhausen’s powerful animation. Filmed in moody black and white, the atmosphere was one of total sobriety, spawned out of a decade when science-fiction was taken seriously and explanations for phenomenal creatures were more plausibly advanced. The live action was low key; the performances were engaging and credible. The makers wanted you to *believe* that this was happening—or at least that it could. The last urban monster-on-the-loose film had been *King Kong*, shot (literally and filmically) twenty years earlier. “It’s Coming!” was *Kong*’s terse catchphrase. Similarly, in a new age of



atomic mutations and flying saucers, the marquee grabber "It's Alive!" was all it took to lure audiences into theaters during the blistering summer of 1953.

### Keep Watching the Skies!

By 1952, the stage had been set for *The Beast's* emergence. Director Howard Hawks terrified audiences a year before with a blood-sucking alien ripping through the *ennui* of an Arctic outpost in *The Thing from Another World*. The electrifying statement of paranoia by the bespectacled news reporter, warning people to watch the skies—everywhere—was a sign of the times. George Pal's movies preached Doomsday, and Richard Carlson was about to have a close encounter with a xenomorph in *It Came from Outer Space*. A smaller-scale invasion took place in the Scottish moors by a bubble-headed alien in *The Man from Planet X*. Then RKO re-released *King Kong* into theaters, which packed an even greater wallop than its 1938 reissue.

Pictures like *Man from Planet X* attracted small-time producers seeking to capitalize on monster films and *film noir* crime dramas. Two such entrepreneurs were Jack Dietz and Hal Chester. Dietz was a producer of the Sam Katzman ilk, who bankrolled the Bowery Boys specials at Monogram in the forties; Chester himself had played one of the Boys. Together with editor Bernard Bur-

ton, they formed their own releasing corporation, Mutual Films of California, which resided in the Motion Picture Center rental studio in Hollywood.

After Mutual released a film called *Models, Inc.* in May of 1952, Jack Dietz ran across three drafts which he felt had some exploitative value. One was an

production designer, who moved to Paris in his youth. Dietz was well aware of Lourie's reputation: before coming to Hollywood in 1941, he had already designed several Jean Renoir films (*La Grande Illusion*, *The Rules of the Game*, *The Human Beast*), as well as having worked with some of Hollywood's most

***The monster was moving toward the lighthouse now. McDunn switched off the foghorn. The monster stopped and froze. It witched its head this way and that, as if seeking the lost sounds in the fog. Then its eyes caught fire and it rushed toward the tower. . . The huge eye glittered before me like a cauldron into which I might drop, screaming. The tower shook. The foghorn cried; the monster cried. It seized the tower, gnashing at glass, which shattered upon us. The foghorn stopped abruptly. We knelt together, while our world exploded. Then there was only darkness and the sea washing on fallen stones.***

**—Ray Bradbury,  
*The Foghorn***

adventure, another a prison escape drama, and the last was something called "The Monster from Beneath the Sea." The idea was to produce them as low-budget deals for an independent circuit of regional distributors.

To art direct the trilogy, Dietz contacted Eugene Lourie, a Russian-born

prestigious emigre: Max Ophuls (*The Exile*), Renoir (*The Southerner*), and Charlie Chaplin (*Limelight*). Dietz also knew that Lourie was capable of designing a picture with minimal resources on fast and furious schedules. He was working on a television show at the Hal Roach Studio when the call came.

Ray Harryhausen's Rhedosaur roaring in defiance in his Culver City animation studio (1952).







Lourie and his New York camera crew at the Fulton Fish Market beneath the Brooklyn Bridge during location filming in July, 1952. Smiling stevedores were used as extras for the shot of the Beast rising out of the East River.

### From Renoir to Rhedosaur

"I had just finished designing Chaplin's *Limelight* in 1952," Lourie recalls, "when Dietz asked me to art direct these three pictures. The scripts didn't exist at that time; I was just given the stories in outline form. Of the three, only one interested me: the monster picture. It presented a kind of challenge. When I asked Dietz as to who would direct this picture, he said 'On our budget, we don't know!' The budget was \$150,000—who could direct it for so little money? I told him that nobody would direct on his money and schedule, but if he wanted, I would do it. Dietz took this as a joke."

Three weeks later, Dietz called Lourie again. Mutual's plans had changed—the three-picture deal was out, but the dinosaur saga was in. "Dietz asked me if I was still interested in doing the picture. Frankly, in the interim, I had forgotten

about it. So, having never formally directed a film before, I accepted, Dietz said, 'OK, but take care of this script first!' So I began to work with writers and developed it."

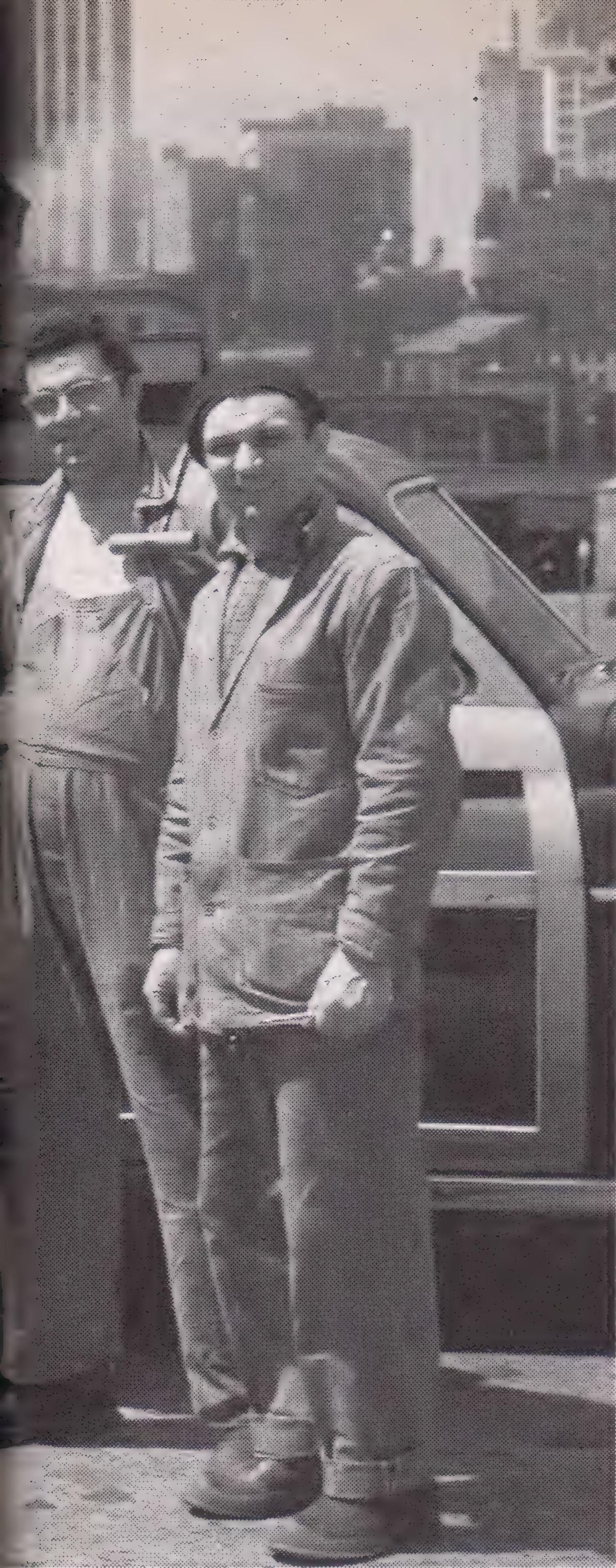
The writers who received screen credit—Fred Freiberger and Lou Morheim—were hired by Dietz and Chester to flesh out (and later revise) the screenplay about a monster frozen in Arctic ice which is released by an atomic blast and goes on a rampage through New York City. Freiberger, then a fledgling scribe, would later produce *Star Trek*, *Space: 1999* and *The Six Million Dollar Man*. Morheim, later a more experienced writer, became story consultant for *The Outer Limits* as well as producer of *The Big Valley* and *Ironside*. Secretly, however, it was Eugene Lourie, together with a blacklisted screenwriter, who banged out 80% of the first script. Ray Harryhausen suggested the idea of a runaway rollercoaster and the fiery amusement park finale, which the writers

embraced with open arms.

The project was announced in the trades as *The Monster from Beneath the Sea*. During its development, Hal Chester called in Ray Bradbury and asked him to read the script, make suggestions, and add his name to the film. Upon hearing that his friend Ray Harryhausen was about to do the effects, Bradbury agreed. The script did little else but remind him of a vignette he had sold to *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1951 entitled *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (reprinted later as *The Foghorn*). It told the story of a dinosaur attracted to the mournful bleat of a lighthouse warning signal. Crawling out of the ocean, it destroys the lighthouse and slithers back into the sea, pathetically.

Chester blanched when Bradbury informed him of the similarity. Smelling a lawsuit, Mutual bought the rights to the story and title for \$2,000 and Bradbury made his exit.





Young at RKO-Pathé, he tried in vain to get two projects going (*Food of the Gods* and *Valley of the Mist*) with his mentor, Willis O'Brien. Joe had been a box office failure because of its enormous production expense (\$2.5 million, counting a whopping overhead) and producers—unaware of *why* that figure was so high—were hesitant to go with stop-motion animation.

Determined to strike out on his own, Harryhausen returned to the *Mother Goose Stories* which he had started in 1945. He had just completed *The Story of Rapunzel* when Hal Chester, who had heard of the young animator—and his inexpensive price tag—mentioned him to director Lourie. At first, Willis O'Brien was considered for *The Beast*, but had the reputation of hiring expensive crews. Lourie had already decided that stop motion was the most viable method of bringing a dinosaur to life. A meeting was arranged between Harryhausen and financial arm Hal Chester, who asked Jack Dietz to confer with Harryhausen.

"Dietz came over to my house," Harryhausen recalls, "and saw my dinosaur experiments for *Evolution*. He said, 'Come over to my office, we're talking about making a monster picture.' They had a script which I read. I told them, 'It sounds interesting, and I think I can do it.'" Harryhausen secretly had his doubts. Nothing like this had been done before without costly glass paintings and miniature sets. But, wagering that he could insert models into live backgrounds with split-screen photography, he cast any negative thoughts to the wind.

Another meeting followed with Ches-

ter and Lourie. The Frenchman was delighted. "I met Ray in his garage where he was painstakingly shooting his charming fairy tales. The one I saw was *Rapunzel*. I liked what I saw. The animated movements were smooth, not jerky, as in many films of this type. Ray was a very agreeable person, fully dedicated, and immersed in his work. So I felt that he would do a masterful job and be a valuable partner in our project. We shook hands, and I advised him to obtain the best deal he could from our 'lean cow' producers. I'm afraid that, like all of us, he had to work for a pittance."

Harryhausen struck a deal with Chester and Dietz—he would do the effects for a flat fee of \$6,000 plus the equipment necessary for the camera and rear projection work. They arranged to buy him one of the ARKO stop-motion projectors machined by Harry Cunningham for *Mighty Joe Young*, a one-horsepower motor. Harryhausen had already purchased a Mitchell 35mm movie camera. Financially, his deal wasn't much, but to a hungry Hollywood animator in 1952, it was work.

Eugene Lourie submitted some concept sketches of the Beast to Harryhausen, then flew to New York at the end of July 1952 to begin a week of location work, filming process plates of extras and locals running in panic. Other scenes that were supposed to be Manhattan were done later on the New York Street at Paramount Studios.

"Ray was not with me when we shot the plates," Lourie explains, "although he wanted to go. The fact was, we didn't have the money to send him to New York! So I told him, 'I can do it. I know what you want.'"

"It was a very emotional idea," Lourie remarks. "The foghorn was supposed to have resembled the mating call of the creature and was therefore drawn to it. We just used it as a tiny episode."

Ray Harryhausen realized this in a long shot using his dinosaur, a miniature lighthouse, and a plate of the sea which he front-projected onto a large white card during a second camera pass. He also built a seven-inch hand puppet based on his own design, used strictly for full-scale rear projection of the Beast's face behind the window of the lighthouse interior. A ripple glass in front of the hand puppet created a rainy effect. These plates were created early, enabling Lourie to get some 'beast encounters' rolling prior to animation.

### Life After "Joe Young"

Harryhausen's involvement came about serendipitously. After fourteen grueling months animating *Mighty Joe*



Full scale rear projection shot of the Beast attacking some not-so-bright (or very brave) cops. Filmed at the Motion Picture Center studio, Hollywood.



## Monster on the Loose!

The New York footage was shot in two days Lourie operated like a well-oiled machine. "I guess those scenes can be called 'second unit stuff,' but since they were such vital parts of the picture, that classification can sometimes seem like Hollywood nonsense. I scouted locations meticulously, going from one proposed location to another many times. Finally, I made a shooting schedule for myself not unlike a railroad timetable, where I had to move from one set-up to another within 15 minutes. If one set-up required more time, I had to strike the next one and move right along the line!"

Lourie's lean New York crew consisted of an assistant director (who also functioned as unit manager), a local cameraman, an assistant cameraman, and a grip whose station wagon was used as a camera car. All worked fast and efficiently.

"On Saturday morning, we set our camera underneath the Brooklyn Bridge at the dock of the Fulton Fish Market, where I enrolled a group of stevedores to run on cue. That was for the shot when the Beast rose out of the East River. They were very eager to be photographed so they could show their wives that they weren't drinking on the job!" Had those men actually witnessed a dinosaur emerging, they would have been blotzed for days.

The deserted Wall Street canyons on a Sunday morning provided the perfect stage for an *en masse* riot. "Sunday was our big day. We shot more than 40 set-ups using some 30 street locations. I remember that I had asked for 50 extras, 29 of them with cars. We met on Wall Street at 6:45 a.m., but only 25 extras with 12 cars showed up! The unit manager explained that shooting on a Sunday meant he would have had to pay double and he cut the personnel down. So we had to make the action cuts shorter, but still maintain the impression of a Manhattan 'crowd'."

The entire New York junket cost a miniscule \$5,000, everything included, right down to coffee. Altogether Lourie had gotten some sixty scenes in the can.

Returning to Hollywood, he assembled his actors on a stage at the Motion Picture Center studio, 846 North Cahuenga Boulevard, and filmed all his interiors there. A number of television shows were shooting on the adjacent stages—*I Love Lucy* and *Abbott & Costello*, to name only two—making this a peculiar place for a monster movie.

"I had to design all of the sets for *The Beast* and be my own art director," says Lourie. "It was part of my deal. I had only one draftsman (Horace Howe) whom I gave the title of assistant art director for the period of actual shooting. Set dresser Edward Boule was also a great help."

Despite the paltry budget, Lourie was

able to use the three largest stages of the rental studio, particularly the one for Dr. Kelson's paleontology room at the Museum of Natural History. The sixteen-foot dinosaur skeleton seen in those shots had actually been built by the RKO prop department in 1938 for *Bringing Up Baby*. "I just rented the bones," he says. "We spent little money, but really made the most of what we could get."

Another big stage was used for the snow set. At the start of the film, scientists drive a snowmobile to the site of their atomic explosion, and proceed on foot to check the radiation monitors. One of the them falls into a crevice and injures his leg. Through the blizzard, he sees a gigantic silhouette of the howling Beast. Panicking, he fires a signal. Professor Nesbitt (Paul Christian) finds his wounded comrade, but is unable to hoist him out of the crevice. He goes for help and the storm intensifies. Then he sees the monster and loses his way, horrified. Snowmobile drivers take him back to the base; the other scientist is never found. Nesbitt, hysterical for very good reasons, cries out about the monster. No one will believe him.

The heavy furs that had to be worn by the talent made for problems under the hot lights. The snow was *real* snow.

"It was the hottest day of the year," Lourie remembers. "The snow machines we used are the same ones now used in making slopes for ski jumps. They would arrive at 7 a.m. and cover most of the set with finely crushed ice. I remember how warm the set was and how uncomfortable it must have been for the people in those coats. In fact, we had to continuously produce new layers of snow between takes because everything was melting fast!"

This was Roger Corman-type filmmaking, three years before Corman's advent. Lourie didn't believe in shooting extra protection footage. In fact, he was afraid of giving the editor the opportunity of altering his continuity. Everything was kept extremely tight. Later, the editor admitted that he had never finished a picture so quickly.

Sometimes four sets were used in a day's shooting. A stone wall collapses on a group of frightened pedestrians. The lighthouse keeper is crushed on a spiral staircase of the shattered edifice. A fishing trawler advances through the foggy sea before being destroyed by the creature. Nesbitt lies in a hospital room, stunned. And so on. Altogether Lourie shot some twenty sets.

After Harryhausen animated close-ups of the Beast, another stage was made available at the rental studio for full-scale rear projection, allowing the director to polish off what was left of the live action: the Beast advances down Wall Street chasing crowds down a subway entrance, and the militia (from a



makeshift bunker in Coney Island) fire their bazookas at the monster, to no avail.

On August 15, 1952, *The Hollywood Reporter* announced that "Director Eugene Lourie yesterday completed shooting Mutual's *The Monster from Beneath the Sea* and starts co-editing the film with associate Bernard





Burton." On schedule, he had wrapped the live action in twelve days.

### Brooklyn's Towering Inferno

Post-production was devoted to the construction of miniatures, breakaway sets, and mechanical effects with special attention given to the rollercoaster sequence at the world famous

amusement park in Coney Island.

Lourie designed the rollercoaster to match an existing one at Long Beach. He photographed it at the rental studio after coating it with a layer of rubber cement for flame effects. It stood nearly six feet at its highest peak, and was later rear-projected behind the Rhedosaur. A smaller miniature railing was pieced

The New York Street, a standing set at Paramount in Hollywood, as it looked in August, 1952. Sequences for *Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* were filmed here and intercut with Manhattan location footage. Director Lourie is walking down the center of the street facing the camera.

together for the animal to chomp on.

"The actual shooting of this miniature sequence was quite elaborate,"



Lourie points out. "I had to plan and pre-cut sections of the flaming miniature and jerk them away to correspond with the Beast's animation made later by Ray. I remember that we spent almost an entire day with Ray planning and shooting this sequence. I also had to shoot the speeding coaster car, its crash, and the exploding gasoline." A smaller car

mature. Lourie's concept sketches provided Harryhausen with a point of departure—the final monster was mostly his vision. Dubbed the "Rhedosaurus" (note the first two letters and the sound of the first syllable), it combined several species of dinosaurs that existed during the Mesozoic and Cretaceous epochs. "We felt that a literal

previously masked sections of the projection a frame at a time. Result? A seamless composite without laboratory opticals. The system capitalized on the fact that the two-dimensional eye of the animation camera perceived background and model as being in the same plane. As long as the projected people did not trespass in front of the puppet area, their *position* on the plate needn't be restricted by the dual exposures, allowing them to "run through" the matte line, if necessary. This created a trick sense of perspective as they *seemed* to advance toward or recede from the lens of the animation camera, with the animal right in the picture.

It was magic.

"I went through terrible pangs of 'Can I do it or can I not?' and I always had to prove it to myself first," Ray remarks candidly. "I got into a state of mind that almost bordered on neurosis. Since it was my first solo venture, I had to take a stand that I had to do the best I could under the circumstances, which I tried to do. I was rather proud of the fact that I was able to complete a rather complicated project under rather negative circumstances. I had only six or seven months to do the animation—as well as a lack of a suitable budget."

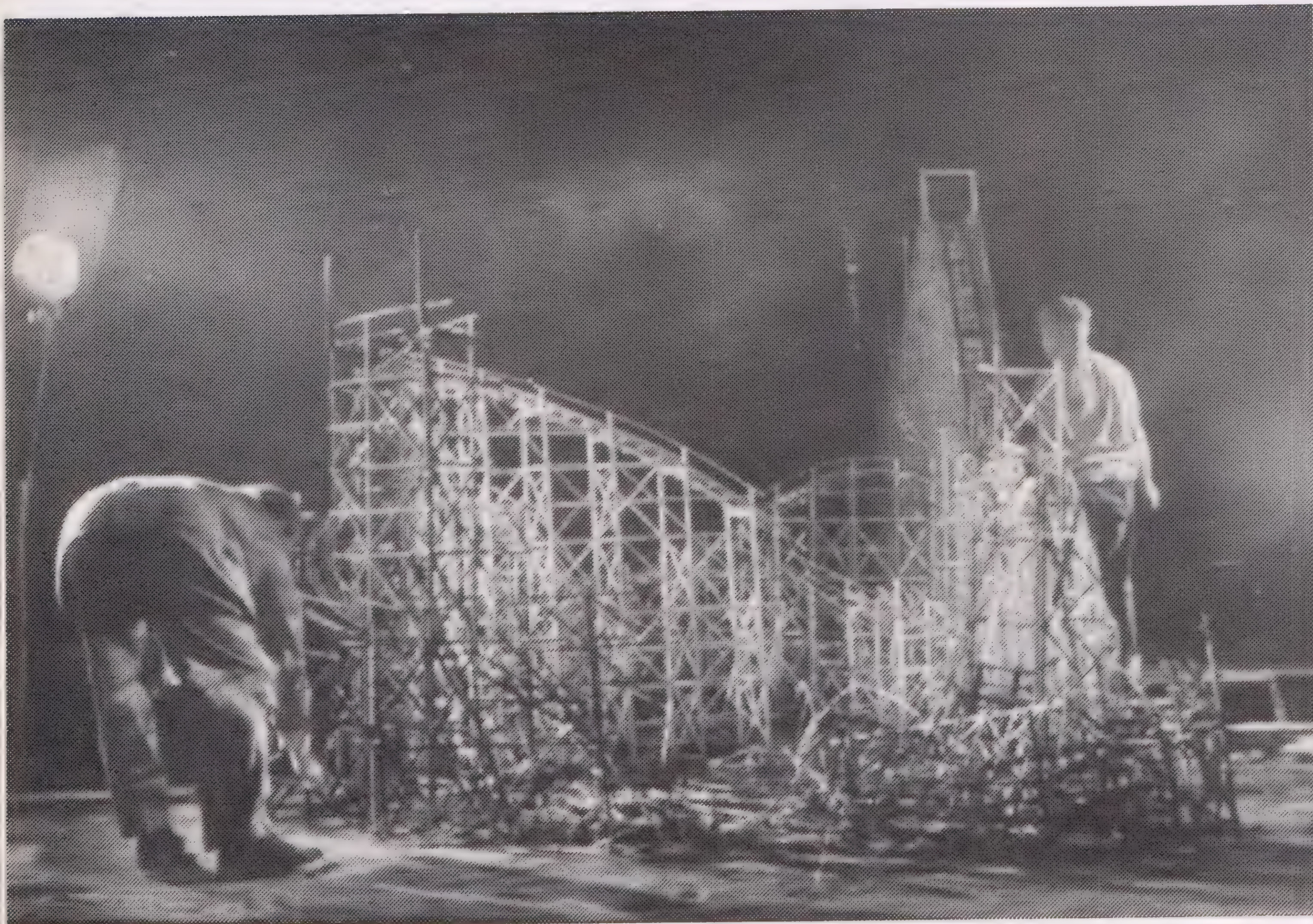
His first split screen test of the Beast rising behind the docks of the Fulton Fish market was perfect, and he knew it would work through out. Later on, Harryhausen animated the Beast model in color for the proposed film, *The Elementals*, which would have been directed by Lourie. But the project fell through.

### Warner's Box Office Bonanza

When Harryhausen's scenes were done and the *The Monster from Beneath the Sea* was finished and edited, Jack Dietz looked at it and his eyebrows went up. He realized that it was too good for the small group of regional distributors he had in mind, so he offered it to Jack Warner for distribution, who was only interested in buying it outright. Said Warner, "I'm not distributing any other pictures, but if you sell it, I will buy it." "Sold," said Dietz. The title was changed by Warner to the more mysterious-sounding *Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*.

New developments cropped up when Jack Warner acquired the picture. Lourie's version actually had another music score tailored to the film. "The original music was much more lyrical," recalls Lourie, "and it used very little orchestra. But Warner felt it wasn't strong enough; he wanted more." David Buttolph was contracted to re-do the score, with resounding orchestrations by Maurice de Packh. Buttolph's music created a dark, ominous mood underscoring key scenes in the tradition of Max Steiner.

For the Beast itself, Buttolph compos-



Eugene Lourie (left) applies inflammable glue to the miniature rollercoaster erected at the General Service Studio in May, 1952. Even a Ferris wheel was built.

miniature was later animated for the actual derailing.

The miniature set pieces were built and photographed by Lourie's unit which included the collapsing icebergs and the avalanche. Some miniatures were sent to Ray Harryhausen's Culver City workshop. The moody shot of the bathysphere descent, for example, was stop-framed on a wire in front of a painted backing, and a ripple glass made "dry for wet" seem real. Harryhausen blasted the beast through a pre-cut miniature wall, a car made of sheet lead crunched under the monster's foot, a lamp post toppled over, and a tiny "woodie" station wagon sat in a scaled-down replica of Nassau Street. The woodie reappeared in Harryhausen's *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* four years later quite inconspicuously.

### Creating a Rhedosaur

Harryhausen sculpted the working model of the Beast and tooled an armature, parts of which were machined by Harryhausen's father. He used Marcel Delgado's "build up" technique, instead of making a plaster mold and injecting foam rubber into it. Actual alligator skins were cast in latex and applied in segments over the cotton-covered ar-

dinosaur would have been too small for our purposes," Harryhausen explained, "so, I made a combination of several. I based it mostly on the head of a tyrannosaurus, with a few differences."

The jaw was crocodilian, marked by rows of razor-sharp teeth. The body was of brontosaurian proportions but more closely resembled a cross between an iguana and a crocodile. The head structure was very reminiscent of the Juniter, which he had created back in 1938. Before the work was finished, he had re-worked the anatomy of the Beast several times. In essence, Harryhausen had created a classic mythical dragon, sans fire breath, which would later be re-worked for the *7th Voyage of Sinbad*.

To integrate the Beast into live backgrounds, Harryhausen devised a composite system which at the time had the Hollywood effects community scratching their heads in befuddlement. This was Dynamation, pure and simple. By animating the model on a tabletop in front of a rear-projected background scene, and obscuring selected portions of the scene with black paint and tape on glass, the animation proceeded accordingly. Then, by removing the tabletop and matte glass, and positioning in a reverse matte glass, he filmed the



ed a descending four-note leitmotif for French horns and trombones, answered by bowed strings on a double bass. Steiner's influence was obvious—even the bathysphere descent used a plaintive strain of harp and lower strings reminiscent of the "Boat in The Fog" passage from *King Kong*, and the crashing musical ending could have easily been lifted from the finale of Steiner's *White Heat*.

The ballet scene observed by Paul Christian and Paula Raymond from their box seats was not in the original film because of the skimpy budget. Stock shots of a ballet were cut in to which Buttolph composed a haunting cello passage that rivaled the most lyrical moments of Wagner and Tchaikovsky.

Lourie's little monster film came in for \$210,000. Jack Warner bought it for \$450,000. It grossed more than \$5,000,000 during the first year of its release, which drove producer Jack Dietz into a fit of jealousy and heartburn. Five hundred prints were tinted in "glorious Sepia Tone". Some cities saw two colors—the underwater scenes were tinted green. A mass media blitz followed, matching the negative cost of the original film. "It's Alive," the ads exclaimed. Jack Warner thought so.

Why does *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* hold up so well? For one thing, the impact of the various scenes in the film was greater than any rival *genre* film of its day. The first glimpse of the Beast, towering above a fur-suited scientist in a blinding snowstorm, induced a deep feeling of suspense and queasiness. Something was lurking in the shadows, waiting to strike back at us.

Artful lighting, with gobo shadows and Venetian blind patterns thrown on the walls, obscured the seams of interior sets. The technique exaggerated space, but time imbued the scenes with a claustrophobic tone.

The narrator opening the film intones the most sober atom-bomb countdown ever to assault an ear. Even before any significant action happens, the dialogue reeks with uneasiness. "You know, every time one of these things goes off, I feel as if we are helping to write the first chapter of a new Genesis," says one optimistic scientist when an A-bomb last razes the Arctic. The hero, sensing the inherent danger of this, replies with a pensive smirk: "Let's hope we don't find ourselves writing the last chapter of the old one." In the wake of the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl disasters, the rhetoric penned for *The Beast* has become disturbingly prophetic.

Then there are the *human* elements of the film: characters you want to like. When Cecil Kellaway, as the cherubic paleontologist, makes his bathysphere descent into the murky depths, He comes off as a gleeful, twinkle-eyed old man experiencing delights long over-

due. "I feel as though I'm leaving untold tomorrows for a world of countless yesterdays," he tells his assistant just before he is devoured. The lighthouse sequence carries a gruesome punch, but intercut with shots of the approaching Beast are scenes of a melancholy seaman tranquilizing himself with the music of a squeeze-box accordion. "I like the old ballads," he remarks wistfully to his companion. Seconds later, they perish. You feel sorry for them.

### Caveat Emptor

The creators of *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* were sincere in their efforts. What they had made, perhaps unknowingly, was a superior-looking horror/science-fiction picture. Quick and economical, it worked. There is a cool honesty about it, which perhaps could not be said of its bankrollers. For some strange reason, the film's sober chemistry never made an effective encore in the Fifties. Jack Warner, being no fool, jumped on the bandwagon soon afterward and made *Them!*, a slick but soulless essay on giant ants and atomic aftermath. Despite its beefier budget, the film failed to capture the mood of Lourie's little gem.


The Japanese were quick to pick up on this, and in 1954 reworked *The Beast* into *Godzilla, King of the Monsters*. Imported to America with a riveting Raymond Burr narration, the film reprised the grim consequences of the H-bomb, and the wail of Japanese schoolchildren singing a requiem for all mankind brought this global torment to an almighty plea for salvation. ToHo, however, seemed more intent on fulfilling some masochistic desire by leveling Tokyo with their storybook dragon (a guilt complex over Pearl Harbor, maybe) rather than gearing their effort to more credible worlds of science or pseudo-science. *Godzilla's* oxygen destroyer was *The Beast's* nuclear bullet, but the similarity ends there.

Even Lourie's *The Giant Behemoth*, produced in 1958 as a carbon-copy *Beast*, failed to recapture the lost glory of the seminal work.

"Overall," the director reflects, "I felt *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* did not forsake us. The action moved forward, the story progressed, the tempo was never lost. I think Ray and I caught the feeling of the Beast trapped in the deep canyons of Wall Street. The picture had a specific tone of its own. Ray's creature dying in the flaming ruins of a roller-coaster surprised us all. It was emotionally strong. The Beast dies like an opera tenor."

*The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* had in its cast a familiar roster of character actors, some big, some small. Kenneth Tobey played a fast-talking military man and repeated the role for Harryhausen's next venture, *It Came from Beneath the Sea*. Paul Christian (a.k.a. Paul Hubschmidt) received top billing as an unknown and turned in an engaging performance which unfortunately went nowhere in American movies. The same for Paula Raymond, the pretty ingenue, whose career nose dived into inferior horror films. James Best, Frank Ferguson, King Donovan, even Merv Griffin (as a radio voice) popped up in the picture.

The best of the bits, though, was saved for last. The rugged sharpshooter, who pumped the Rhedosaur with deadly isotopes, was none other than Lee Van Cleef, who would later make his mark by blowing Clint Eastwood's hat off with a shotgun in the Sergio Leone spaghetti westerns. "Ever use one of these?" asks Christian, holding the weapon that will save Coney Island and mankind from eternal damnation. "Pick my teeth with it," replies a smug Van Cleef.

Who could have made a better case than Van Cleef for doing in the Beast with a single rifle shot? Without knowing it, Hollywood out-did itself. 

A very young Lee Van Cleef takes aim at the Beast.





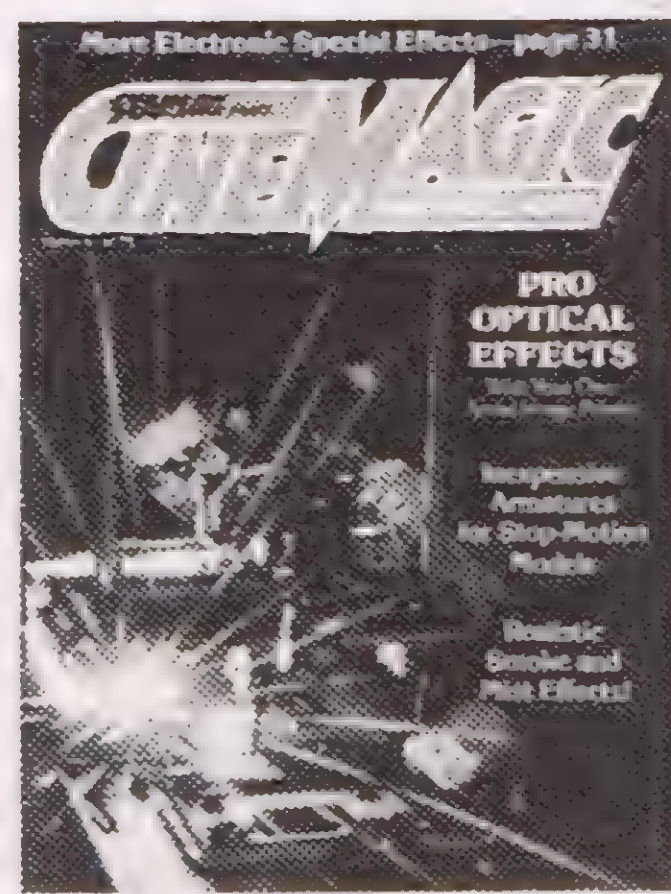
# CINEMAGIC BACK ISSUES



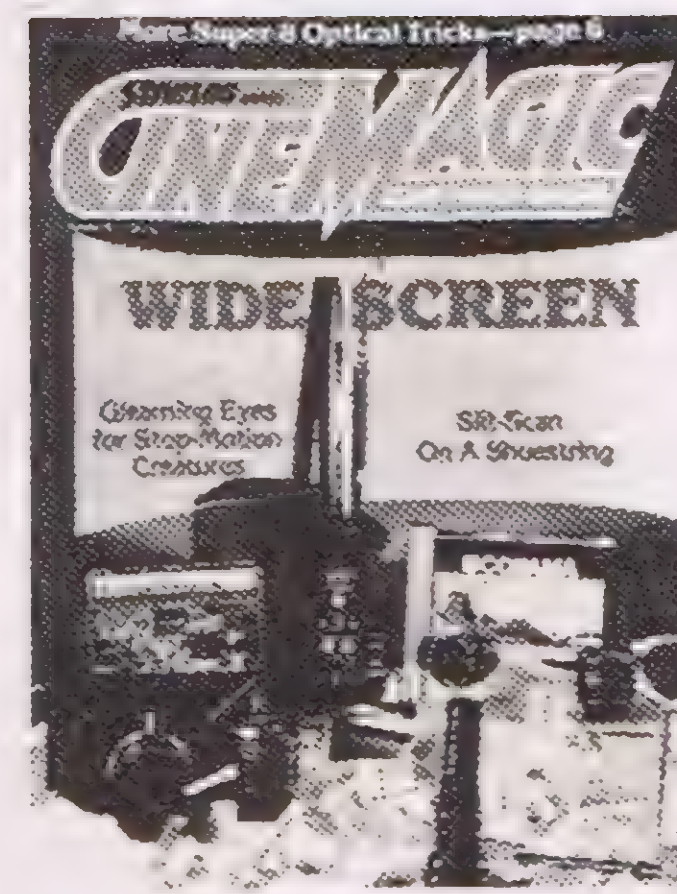
#2—Spaceship Model Making; Blood Makeup; Smoke Generator; Light Beam Effects; Making an SF Logo.



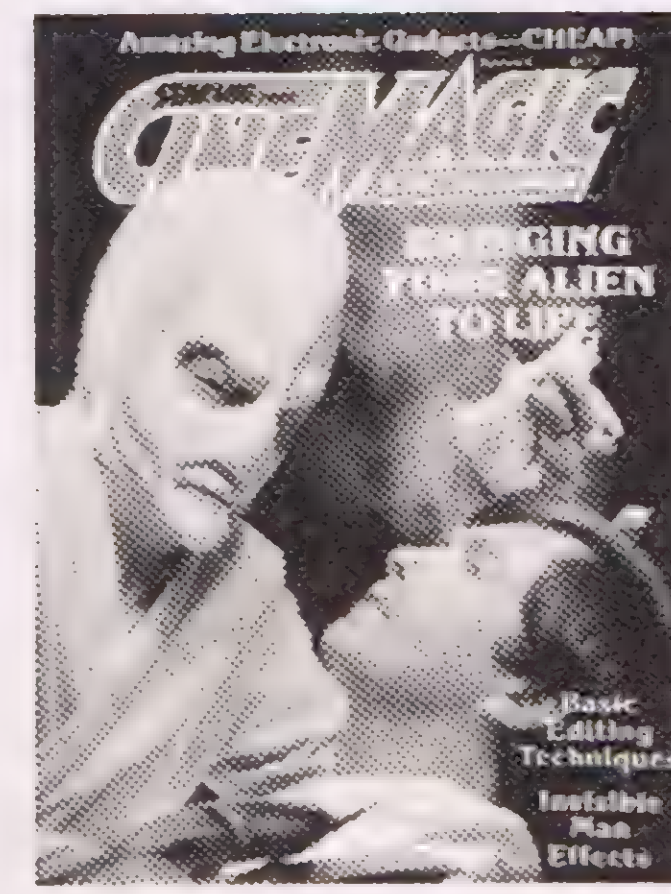
#3—Robot Construction; Developing an Animation Style; Fluid Art Animation; Electronic Special Effects.



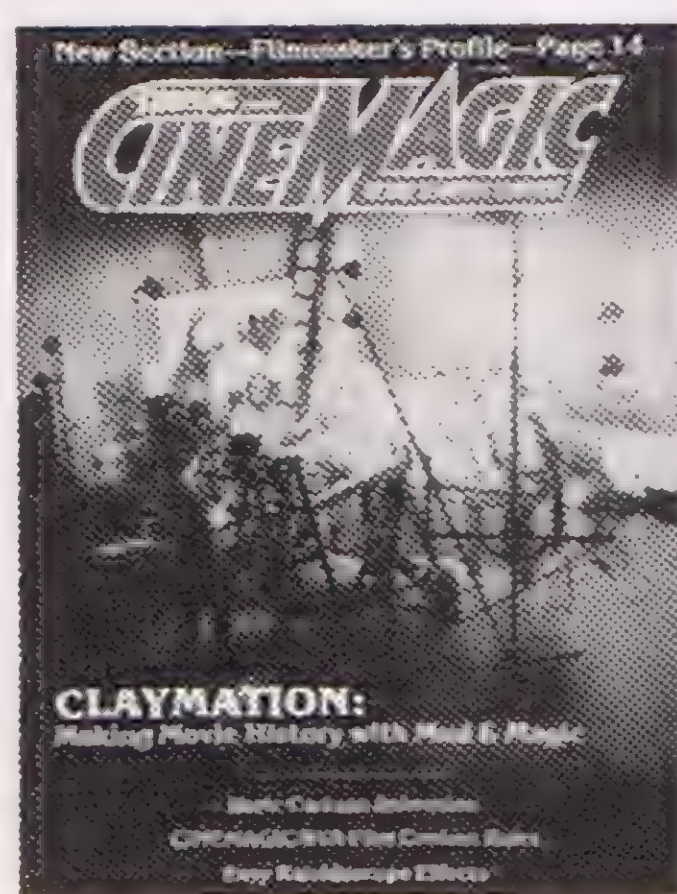
#4—Aerial Image Optical Printer—Construction; Wire Armatures; A-B Rolling; More Electronic Special Effects; Fog and Mist Effects.



#5—Aerial Image Optical Printer—Usage; Widescreen Super-8; Slit Scan Effects; Gleaming Eyes for Stop-Motion Models.



#6—Amazing Electronic Gadgets—cheap!; Bring Your Alien to Life—Latex Masks; Basic Editing Techniques; Invisible Man Effects.



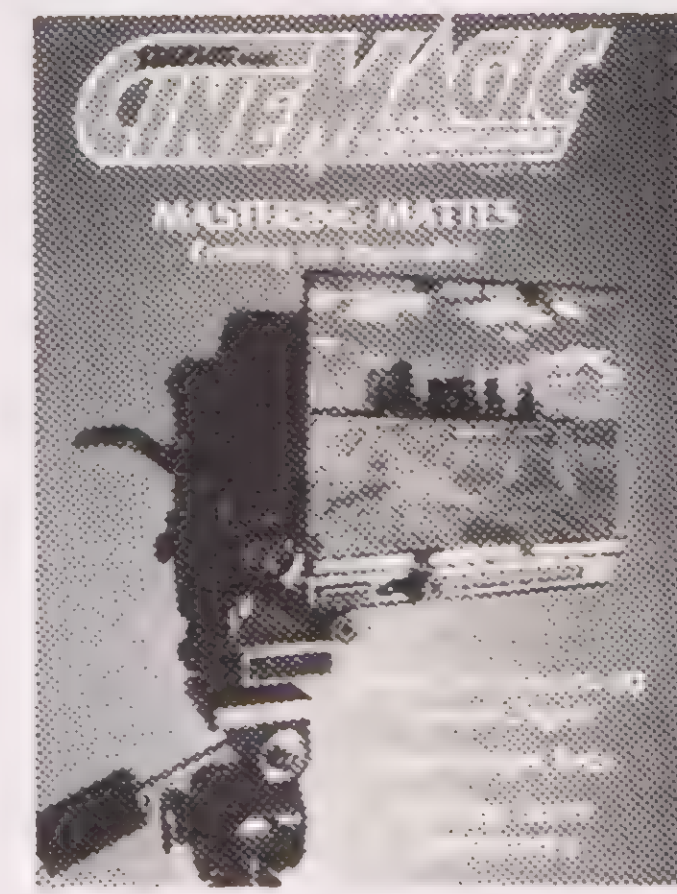
#7—Basic Cartoon Animation; Claymation; Kaleidoscope Effects; Profile—Damon Santostefano.



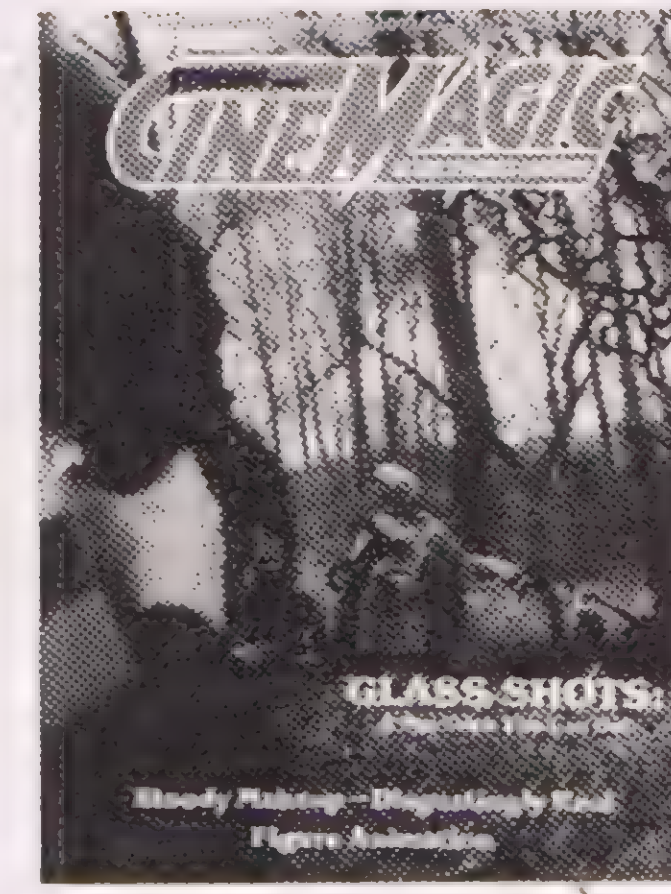
#8—Video Tape Transfers; Reverse Filming Effects; Lab Services; *Clash of the Titans* Preview; Profile—Paul Vitous and Mike Antonucci.



#9—Animating Pogo; Lithographic Film Titles; Sets on a Shoestring; Profile—The Langley Punks.



#10—Mastering Mattes; Zero Budget Sets; CINEMAGIC/SVA Awards Night; Building a Super Soundtrack; Pen Set Ball-and-Socket Armatures; Profile—Joe Ritter.



#11—Glass Shots; Miniature Explosions; Figure Animation; Bloody Hair Hunks; Profile—Koch and Lohr.



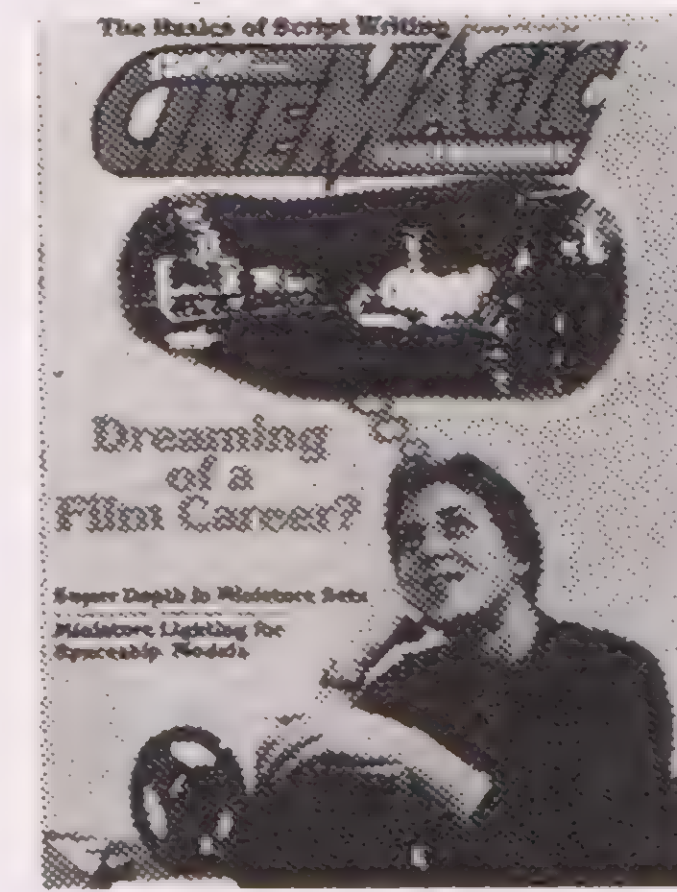
#12—Makeup Magic—Latex Appliances; Rotoscoping; Zero Budget Ray Gun; Profile—Dean Barnes and Greg Gilger.



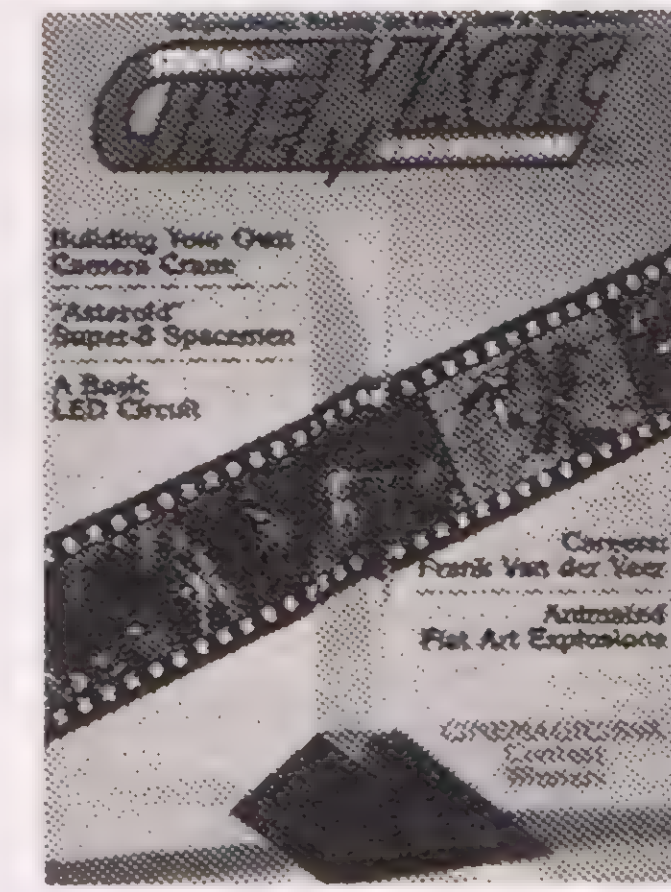
#13—Slit Scan; Creating UFO "Lightships"; Model Interiors; More Electronic Special Effects; The Saturn Machine; Profile—Bonnie Borucki.



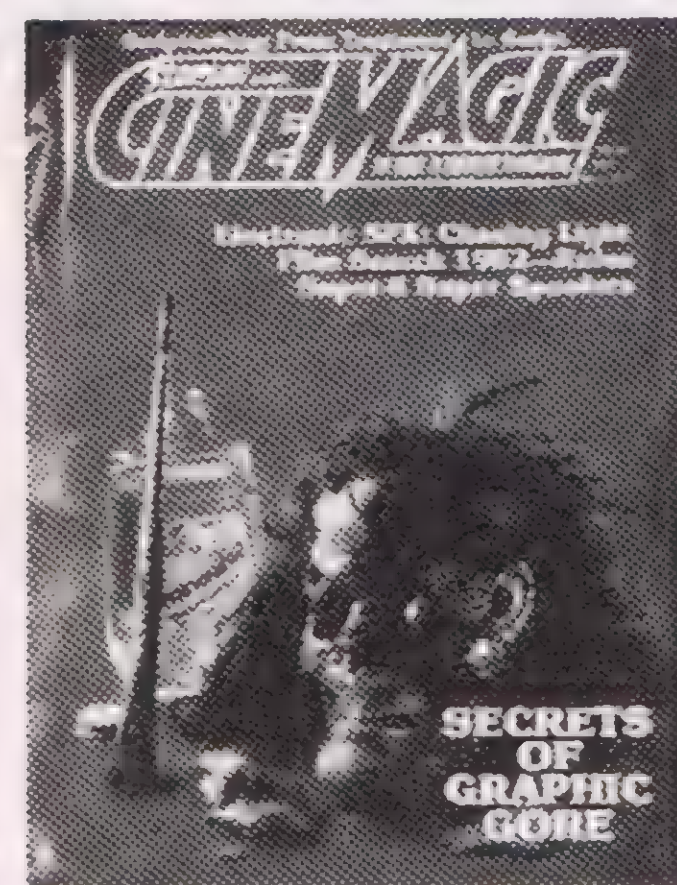
#14—Storyboarding; Sound Effects Generator; Miniature Devastated Cities; Charles Jones' 16mm Space Epic. Profile—Jerry Parisi.



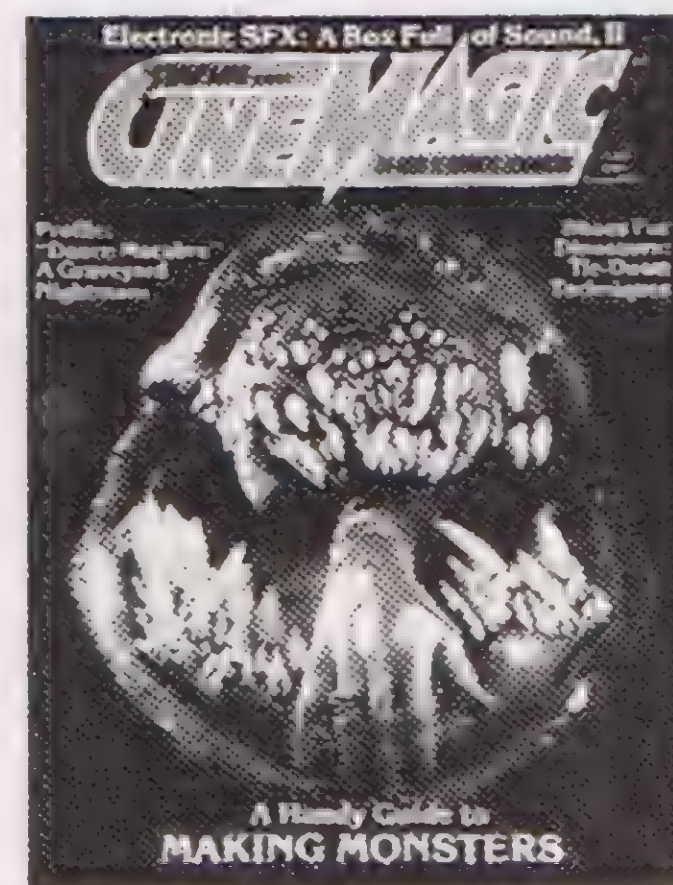
#15—Script Writing; Miniature Lighting Special Effects. Careers—George Lucas and John Dykstra; Dioramas; Profile—Ralph Miller.



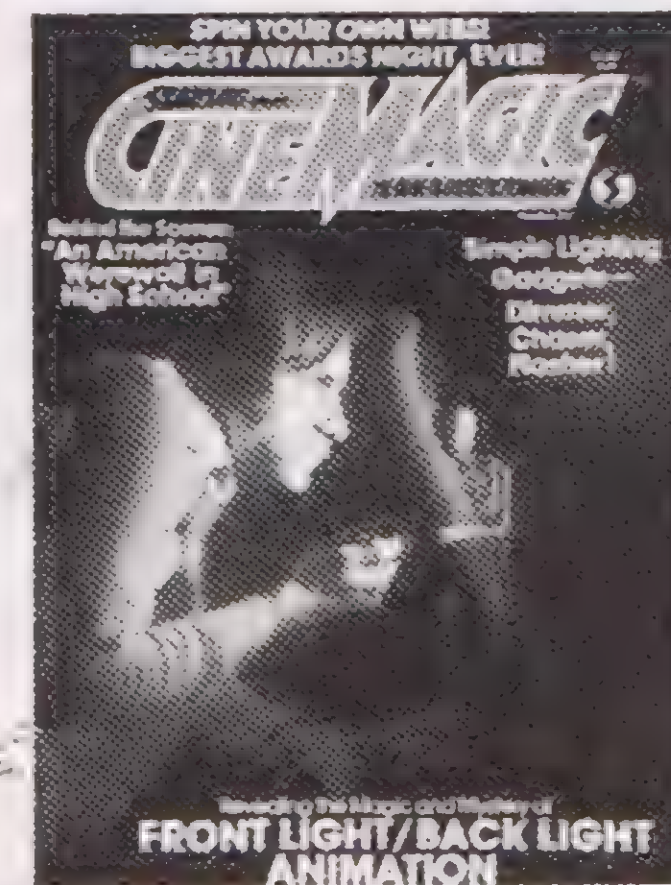
#16—Script Writing, Part 2; Electronic SPFX—LED Circuits; Flat Art Explosions; Careers—Frank Van der Veer; Build Your Own Camera Crane; Profile—Steve Parady and Bill Rudow.



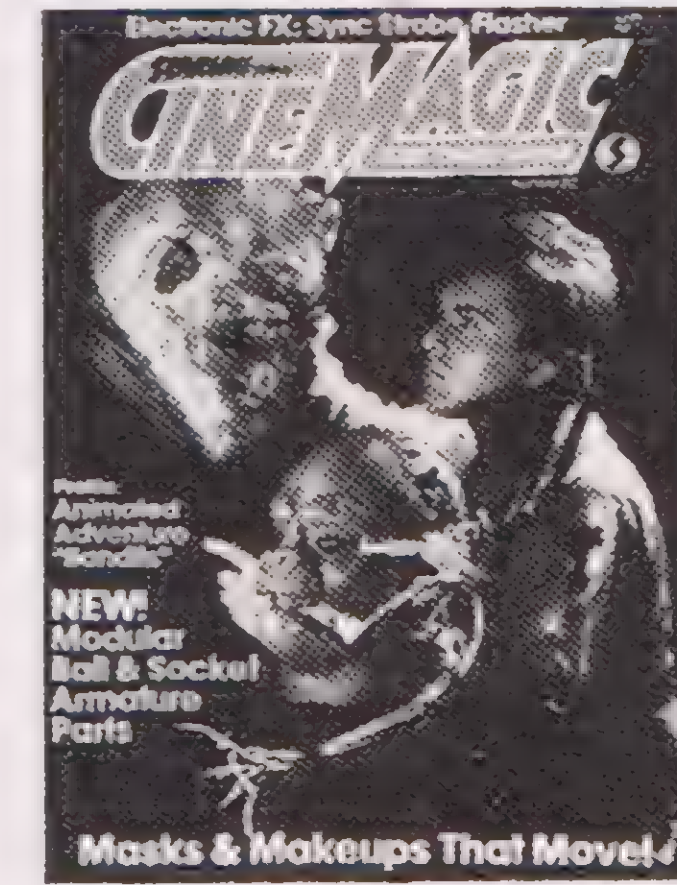
#17—Script Writing, Part 3; Production Managing Low Budget; Electronic SPFX—Light "Chaser"; Secrets of Graphic Gore; Profile—Chris Callaghan and Bob Griffith.



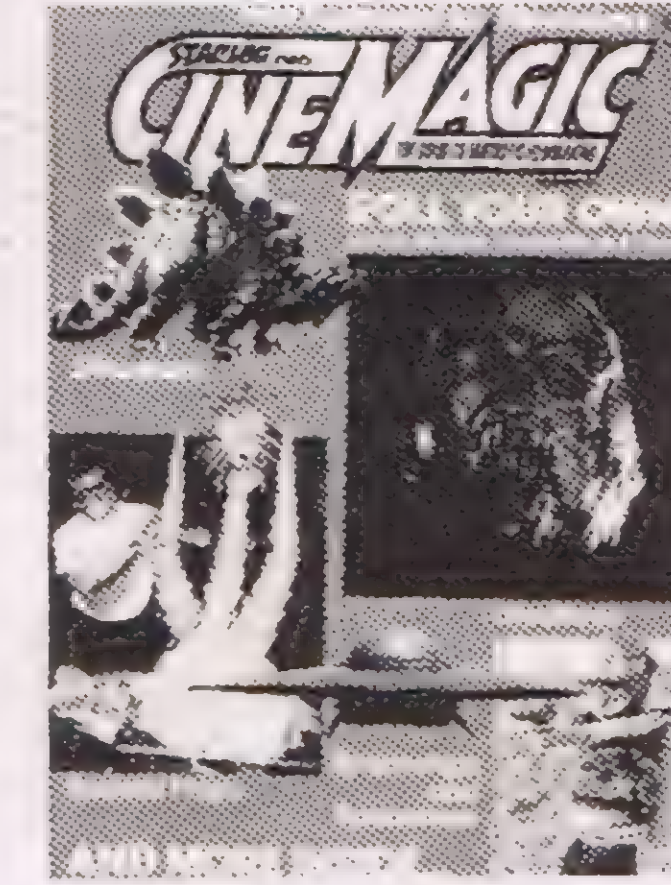
#18—Making Monsters; Tie-Downs for Animation Models; Accessories for Filmmakers; Electronic SPFX—Redesigned Sound Generator; Profile—Al Magliochetti.



#19—CINEMAGIC/SVA Awards Night; Build Your Own Cob Web Spinner; High School Werewolf; Careers—George Melies; Electronic SPFX—Lighting Gadgets; Front Light/Back Light Animation Technique.

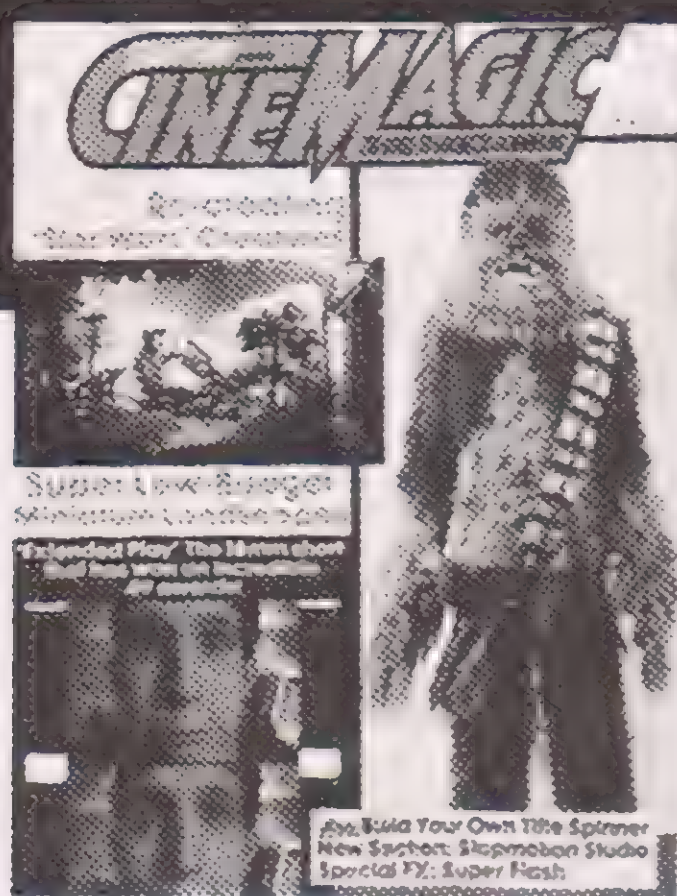


#20—Articulated Full Head Masks; Dream Screen; Precision Ball-and-Socket Armatures Parts; Electronic SPFX—Sync Strobe; Profile—Joey Ahlbum.



#21—Custom Spaceships; Electronic SPFX—DC Strobe; Careers—Robert Short; Foam Rubber Build-up Method; Creating a Monster; Profile—Deborah Von Moser.





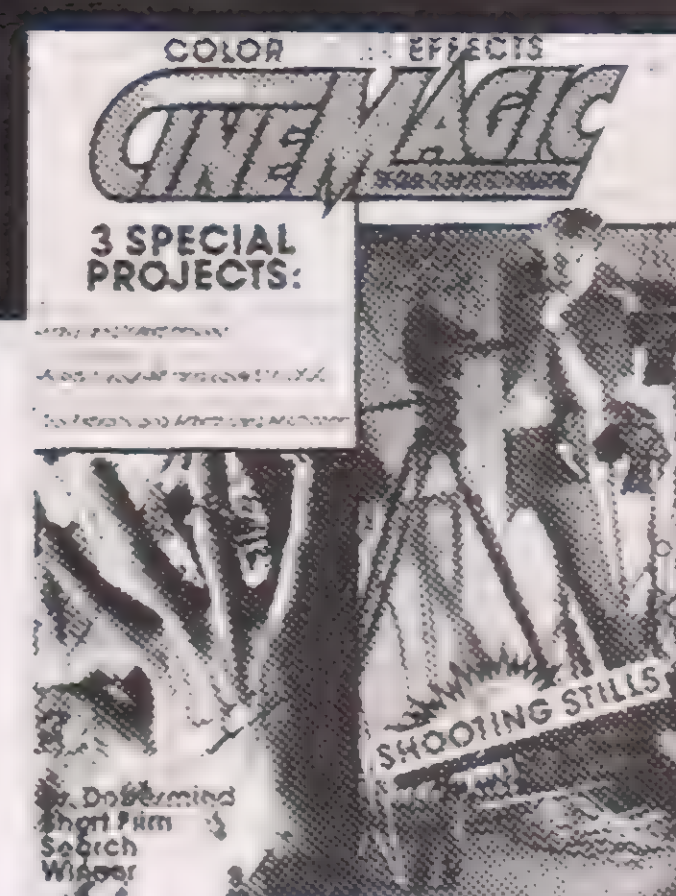
**#22**—Miniature Landscapes; Electronic SPFX—Strobe Accessories; Title Spinner; Ball-and-Socket Armature Parts; Making Creature Makeup; Profile—David Casci.



**#23**—Microcomputer Animation; Make Your Own Cross-Star Filter; Animation Armatures; CINEMAGIC Back Issues Guide; Mark Sullivan's *Highrise*; On Location—*Zyzak is King*.



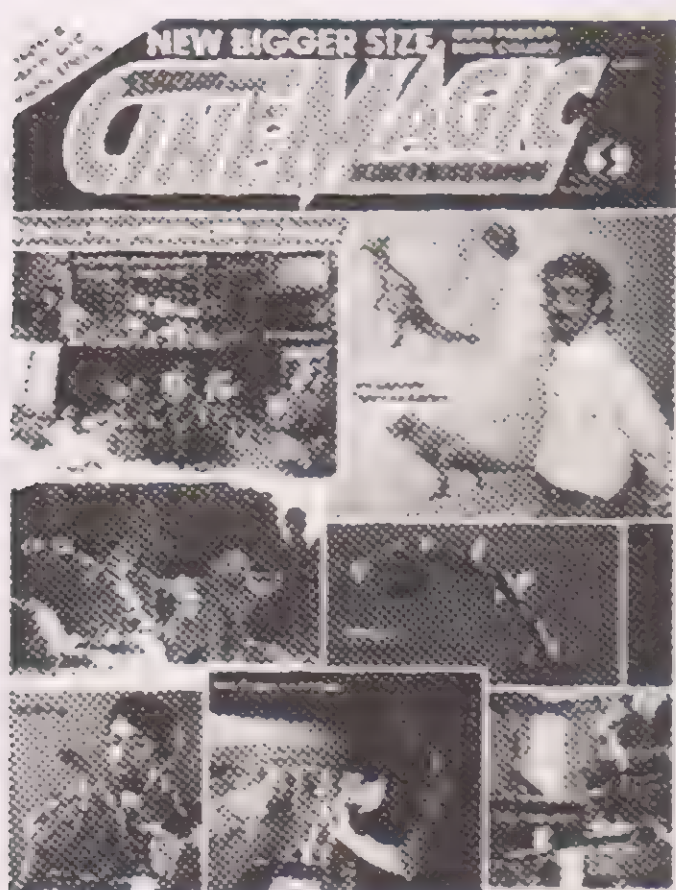
**#24**—Awards Night; Scratch-Building Model Spaceships; Glowing Eyes for Creature Masks; Animation Tips; Easy Armatures; Careers—Roger Corman's Millennium Studios; EZ Effects—Make Your Own Fog Filters.



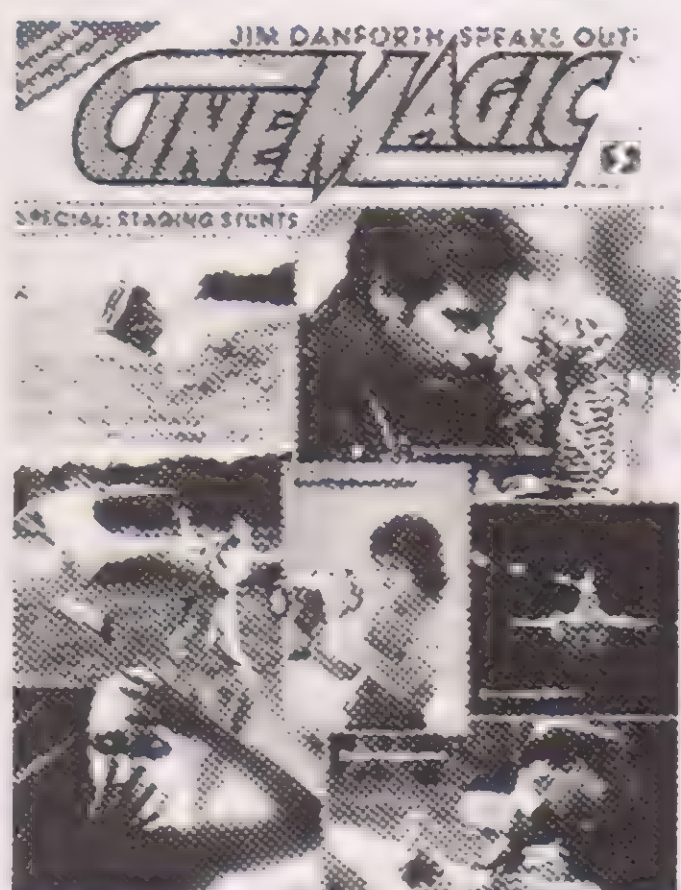
**#25**—Build Your Own Camera Stabilizer; Color Filter FX; Shooting Publicity Stills; Make Your Own Armor; Electronic SPFX—Digital Frame Counter; On Location—*Dr. Dobermind*.



**#26**—Hand Puppet Monsters; Electronic SPFX—Intervalometer; "Star Zoomer"; Three-Headed Armature; "Is Stop Motion Dead?" Melting Man FX; Animator Tony Laudati; On Location—Mendel Marks.



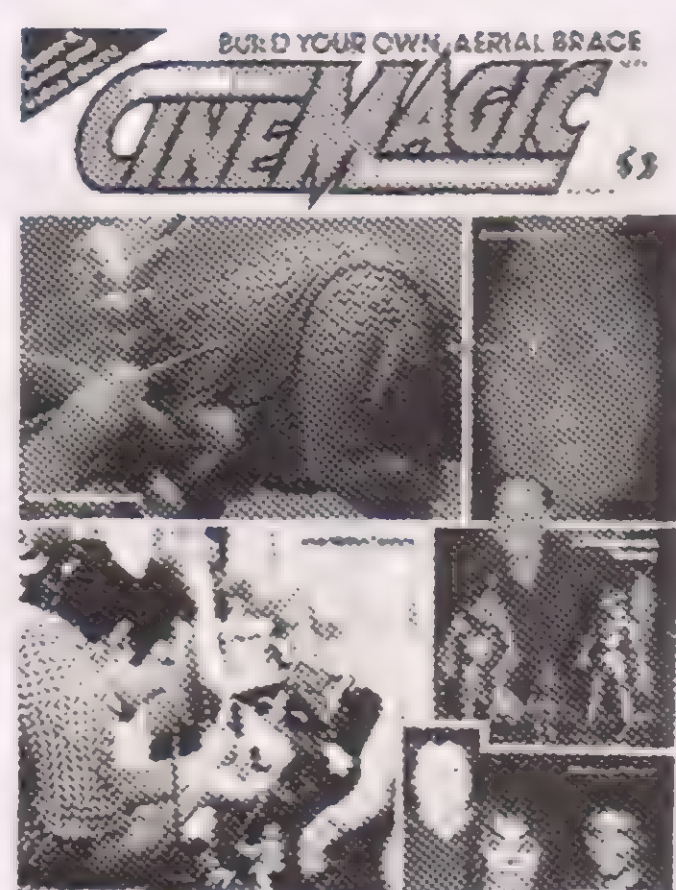
**#27**—New Double-size format! The Art of Stop Motion; Split-Screen FX; Rear Screen Techniques; Supply Sources; Sculpting Clay; Jimmy Picker's *Sundae in New York*; Miniature Planets; Ripple Title FX; Casting Molds; Careers—Jim Danforth, Part I; Armatures; On Location—*Raygun's Nightmare*.



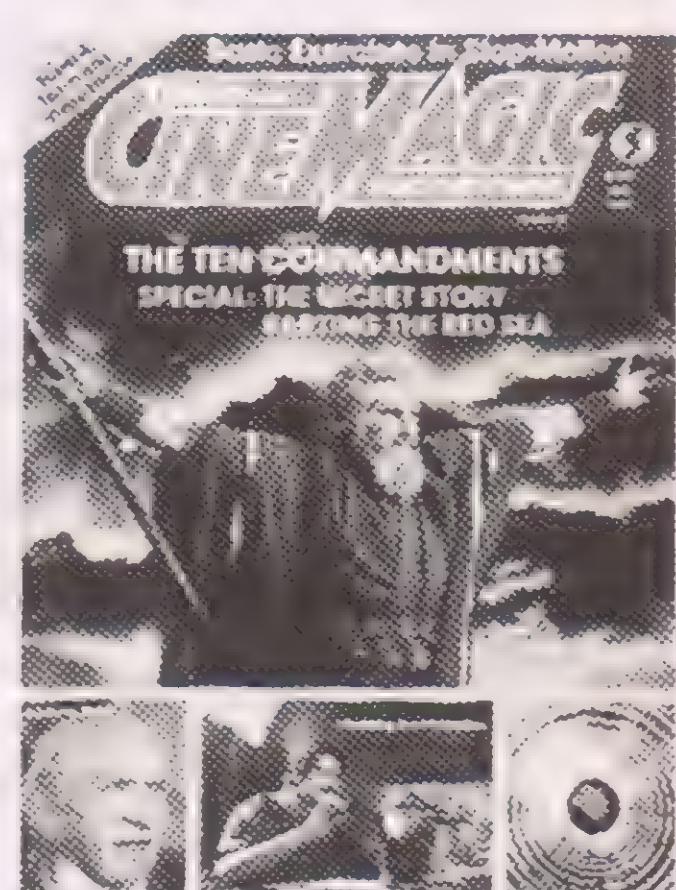
**#28**—Organizing a Film; Jim Danforth on Stop-Motion; A Stop-Motion Epic; Underwater Filming; Pete Peterson; Festivals; Headless Dummies; Casting Actors; Action Stunts; Stop Motion Rock Video; *Pinocchio*; Car Crashes; Makeup FX; Beamsplitter Ray FX.



**#29**—Special Cable-Control Issue! Introduction to C-C; Building a C-C Control Handle; Building a C-C System; Careers: Jim Danforth, Part II; Marcel Delgado—Master of Miniatures; Filmmaker Karel Zemen; E-Z FX—Animation Compound; George Pal's *Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm*; Miniature Mechanical Monsters.



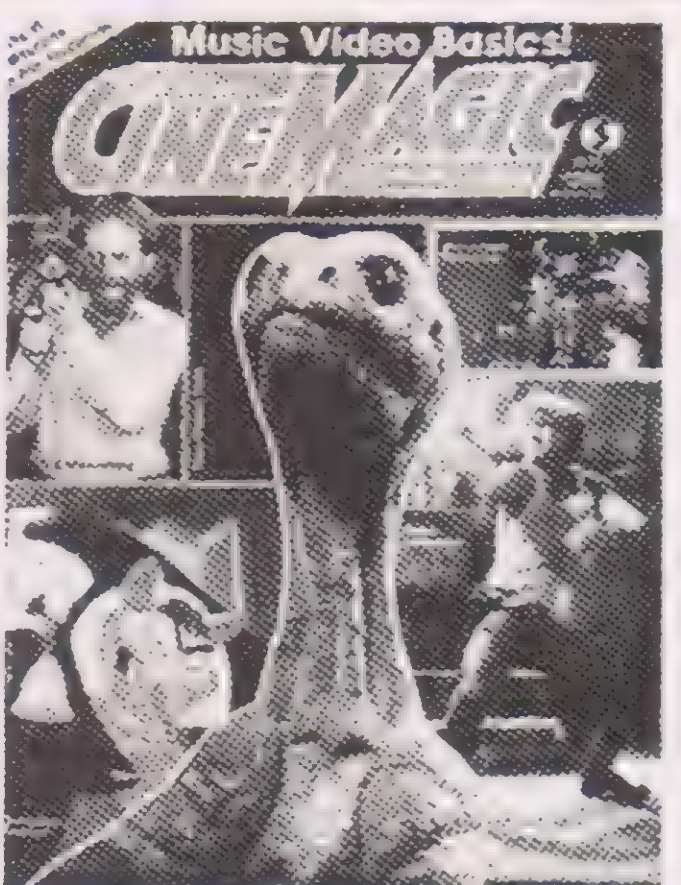
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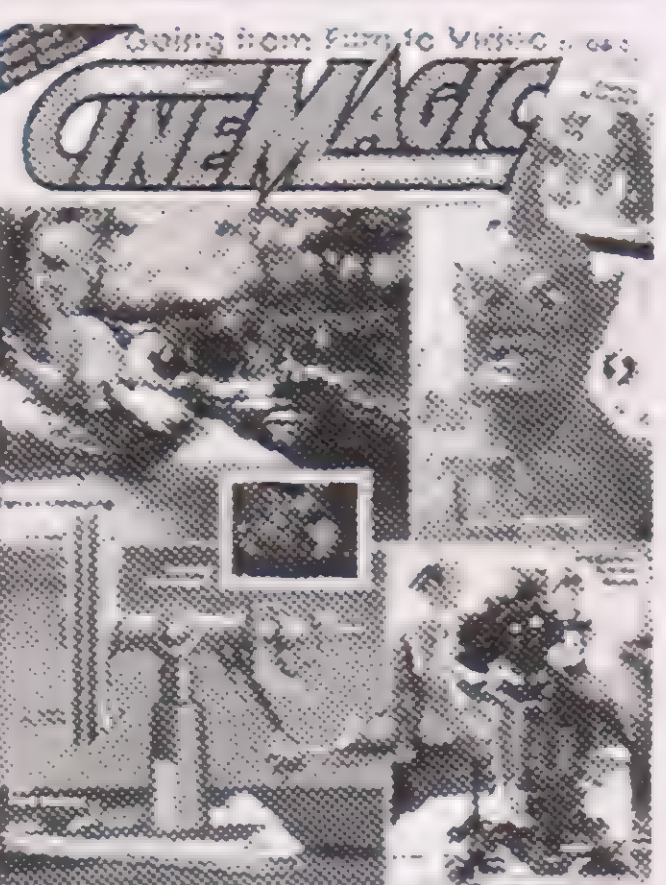
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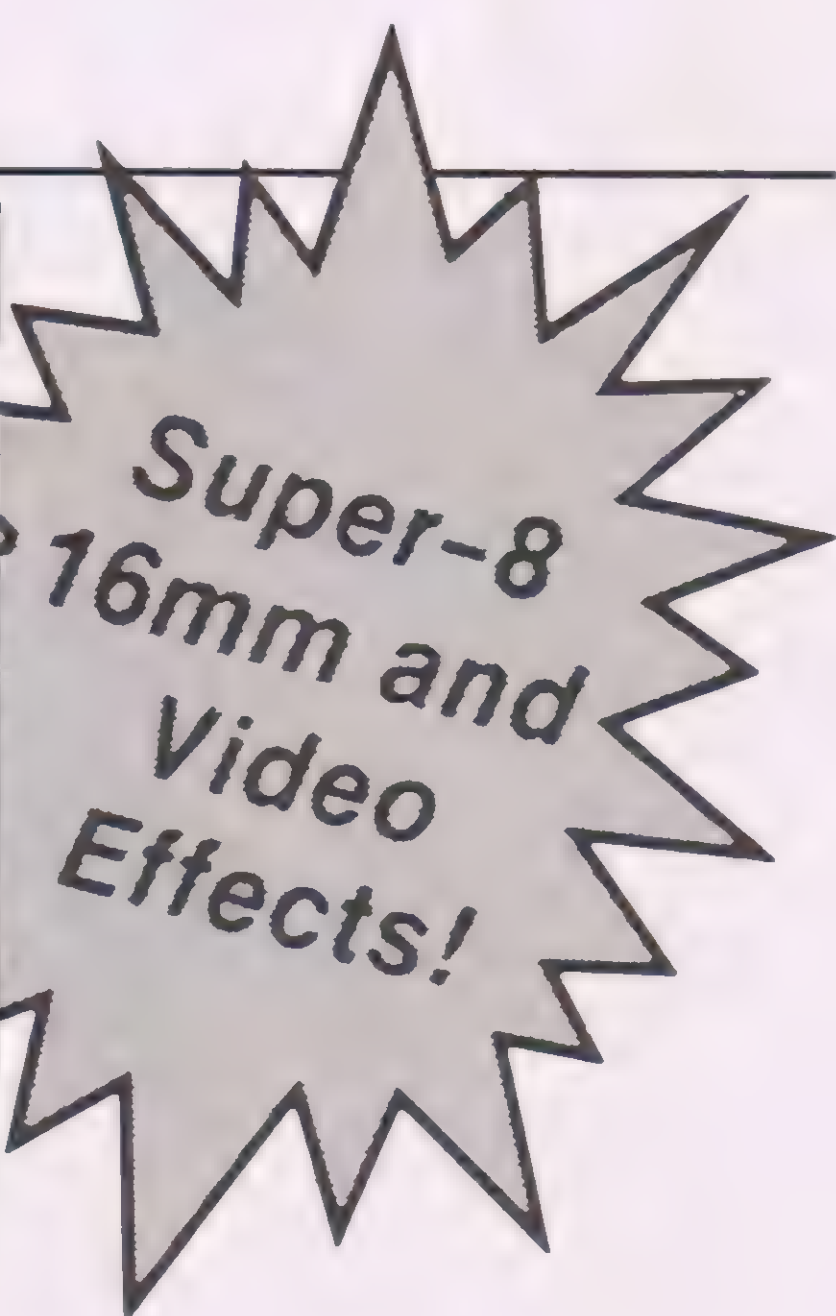
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# Festivals

(continued from page 50)

image sharpness capabilities and fine grain structure to shape the look that he designed for *Peggy Sue Got Married*.

Generally, Cronenweth filmed low-key scenes with a Panaflex Gold Camera working at stop T-2 or T-2.3 using three-quarter front light and crosslight. "The angle and quality of light is much more significant than the intensity," he said.

What it came down to was his ability to previsualize a look for this film, and then execute it by painting with very subtle strokes of light and shadow. To appreciate fully *Peggy Sue Got Married*, you have to consider that there's no second unit, no dramatic landscapes, no sprawling crowd scenes, and no spectacular visual effects. Every frame is carefully crafted by Cronenweth to create the illusion that tells a story.

## "Platoon"

Bob Richardson is a native of Cape Cod, MA. He studied film at the University of Vermont. Ingmar Bergman films, shot by Sven Nykvist, ASC, were a powerful influence during the formative period when Richardson was deciding what to do with the rest of his life. After taking every available film class at Vermont, Richardson moved on to the Rhode Island School of Design.

During the late 1970s, Richardson sent one of his films to the American Film Institute, and was accepted into its apprentice program. The odds on that happening are not quite the equivalent of winning the California lottery, but it is a long shot.

At AFI, he spent a couple of weeks with Nykvist, and also worked with George Folsey, ASC, and Nestor Almendros, ASC. Immediately after completing the program, he filmed a documentary in San Francisco called *Desperate Dreams* about a 100-mile foot race. That isn't a bad description of what it's like trying to gain a foothold in the feature film industry.

Mainly, Richardson shot documentaries with some second-unit and insert work. "If you aren't in the mainstream, you're invisible," he said. But, he didn't mind. Documentaries became a passion.

In 1984, Channel 4, a London-based TV channel, sent Richardson to El Salvador for a month. There, he shot documentary footage with both government and guerrilla troops. It was a turning point that changed his life.

His soundman in El Salvador was Ramon Menendez, who later became Oliver Stone's technical advisor on *Salvador*. Among the people Stone talked to about shooting *Salvador* was Juan Anchia, a friend from Richardson's AFI days. Anchia had another commitment and recommended Richardson. So there were two people, Menendez and Anchia, telling

Stone that Richardson—who had never done a feature on his own—was a likely candidate to shoot *Salvador*.

Then *Crossfire*, Richardson's El Salvador documentary, aired. Stone liked the film's look. He also liked the idea of hiring a cinematographer who could work fast. Richardson had some doubts. Stone wanted a hard-edged documentary look, but Richardson didn't want to get pegged as someone who only shot documentary style.

Nevertheless, Richardson felt fate had brought him to these crossroads, and plunged into the project. About two-thirds of the way through production, Stone started talking to Richardson about *Platoon*, a story he had carried in his head for 10 years since he left Vietnam.

Richardson delved into *Platoon* like a method actor. He spent endless hours pouring over news and documentary footage and read everything there was to read. At first, Stone talked about a docu-feature look much like *Salvador* with desaturated colors, almost black-and-white. However, as he and Richardson discussed the look, they decided that psychological realism would be more important than physical reality.

Shifts in color established rapid changes in mood and situation. The movie opens with the platoon arriving in Vietnam as replacements. The scene is steamy. The hot images almost burn

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through the frame. The colors are literally bleeding, as if they are melting. Richardson achieved this effect with color timing at the lab, but it had the same effect as overexposure.

This cut right to a scene where the platoon is in the jungle. There's a tremendous shift to a dark grey. "There's no color in the jungle," explains Richardson. "The clouds and trees drain the color out of everything." He also used an 81EF filter instead of a number 85 Kodak Wratten filter to give the jungle sequences a bluish edge.

*Platoon* was shot in the Philippine Islands in the heat of summer. It was 102 degrees Fahrenheit when production started, and then the humidity came. Mostly the film was shot in Eastman's 5294 high speed film. About 30 percent of the footage was shot at night, and it was always dark in the jungle, day or night. He had no hesitancy about working on the edge of darkness, shooting most of the jungle sequences, day and night, at stop T-1.4 or T-2.

Two Arriflex BL cameras with Zeiss lenses were used most of the time for coverage. Richardson worked principally with Ultra-speed lenses, but he also made considerable use of 85mm and 135mm lenses on dolly shots where he forced the audience right on top of the actors. In many critical scenes, the screen is filled with just one face.

"Oliver wanted the audience to feel the paranoia of being part of the platoon," said Richardson. "Besides, we had a lot of



The director wanted the audience to feel the paranoia of being a part of the platoon.

characters, and Oliver wanted the audience to get to know them intimately, so he made the audience look at the faces eye to eye."

There's also considerable camera movement. There's a scene where the platoon is moving through the jungle on patrol, and you are seeing it through the camera's eye. Richardson stripped away the depth-of-field, so the audience had to strain to see what was at the edges of the frame. "Oliver wanted the audience to come out of the theatre as exhausted as the surviving members of the platoon," he explained.

There's a night patrol scene where Richardson had four to six footcandles with which to work, so he cut the light in half. Stone wanted the audience to see the

scene the way the platoon did.

Inside the "hooches," Richardson shot mainly with source light coming from some candles, a few lanterns and Christmas lights on one wall. All the key came from source light with only a few In-kies for fill, and Stone was pressing to give the actors 180, 240 and 360 degrees to work in. He wanted them to have total freedom.

Richardson worked at stop T-1.4, and Stone orchestrated movements into the dim source light, while using the shadows for dramatic effect. *Platoon* was a low-budget film that made it big at the boxoffice, and it earned Richardson instant recognition, although some people think *Salvador* was an even more significant achievement.

## SF Summer Festival

The Film Forum Summer Festival of Fantasy and Science Fiction, an 8-week series of science fiction films from around the world, dating from 1902 to the present, will be presented at Film Forum 2 in New York City (57 Watts St.) from Friday, July 31 through Thursday, September 24. Over 70 diverse examples of the genre will be screened, many of them rarely (if ever) shown in their proper theatrical setting.

The festival kicks off on July 31 (through August 2) with a seminal double bill: Jack Arnold's *It Came from Outer Space* (1953)—presented in 3-D—and Robert Wise's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951)—shown with a sparkling new 35mm print.

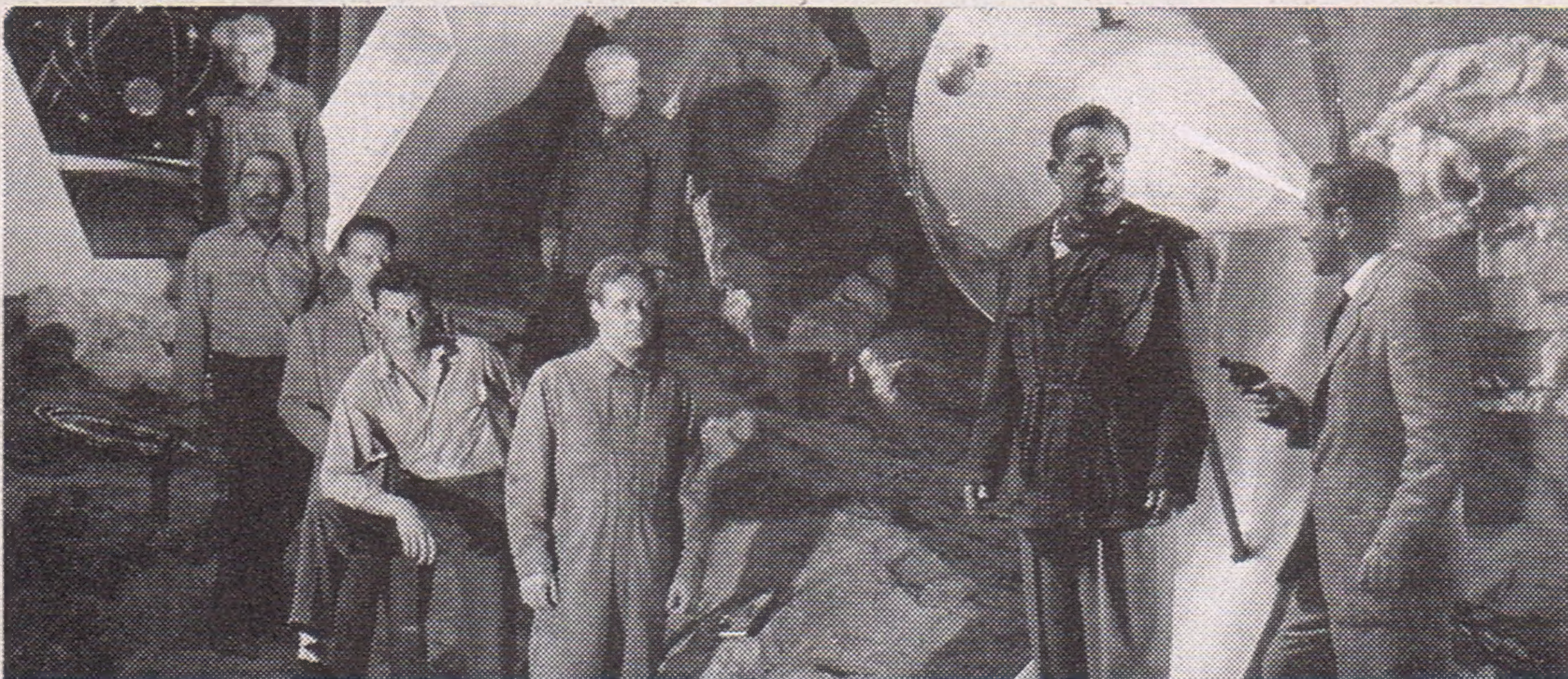
Other highlights include:

A new 35mm print of *Rocketship X-M* (1950), shown with the very rare *The Flying Saucer* (1950), the film which actually coined the term "flying saucers," plus a 35mm kinoscope print of the pioneering teleseries *Space Patrol*, complete with its original commercials, August 3.

The revival premiere of *It! The Terror from Beyond Space* (1958), which was the precursor for *ALIEN*. *It!* will be screened in a new 35mm print with Tobe Hopper's *Lifeforce* on September 8 & 9.

An incredible triple bill of the entire Quatermass Trilogy: *The Quatermass Experiment* (1956), *Quatermass II* (1957), and *Quatermass and the Pit* (1968)—August 19 & 20.

The New York premiere of the full-length Japanese animated *Warriors of the Wind*



Richard Carlson faces his doppelgänger in *It Came from Outer Space*.

(1984), and, from Hong Kong, the Shaw Brothers' dazzling *Infra-Man* (1976)—September 3 & 4.

Two super rarities sharing a double bill: Edgar G. Ulmer's *The Man from Planet X* (1951), plus John Carradine in *The Cosmic Man* (1959), which has long been on many buff's must-see lists—August 18.

A rare screening of Robert Altman's first fiction feature *Countdown* (1968), a science fiction story about Lunar travel which became science fact only one year later; shown with a beautiful 35mm IB Technicolor print of George Pal's *Destination Moon* (1950), which was in many ways, a blue print for NASA's space program many years later—September 1 & 2.

Lunar Toons, a once-in-a-lifetime compila-

tion of Hollywood cartoons with sci-fi/fantasy themes, including shorts by Tex Avery, Winsor McCay, the Fleischers and Chuck Jones—August 28, 29 & 30.

The very first New York City showing in 35mm of *Plan 9 from Outer Space*, plus *Cat Women of the Moon* in 3-D and Chapter 12 of *Zombies from the Stratosphere*, featuring a very young Leonard Nimoy in his alien debut—September 7.

Other films in the series, are: *Invaders from Mars* (1953), *Kronos* (1957), *The Time Machine* (1960), *Woman in the Moon* (1929), *Devil Girl from Mars* (1955), *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (1956), *It Came from Beneath the Sea* (1955), *Conquest of Space* (1955) and dozens more. It's a super SF summer in New York.



# Snow White

(continued from page 45)

My Prince Will Come' and 'Whistle While You Work' and know you're the person who introduced them.

"Actually, I worked very few days on the picture," she recalls. "All the dialogue and musical portions were done in a rather short period of time, then there was a little dubbing to do after the animation was finished. But I always felt very much a part of the Disney family, even though I probably didn't work at the studio more than a week or two."

Ms. Caselotti can still speak and sing in that upper-range voice of Snow White. "It's not my normal voice, of course," she says. "I had to push it up, so to speak, to get that never-never land quality Mr. Disney was looking for. It was easy for me to do because of my early operatic training. And, needless to say, it has all been a very exciting experience for me, the high-point of my professional life."

Several years ago, Ms. Caselotti was called upon to re-record some vocal tracks for the newly remodeled Fantasyland at Disneyland. "After numerous takes and still not getting it quite right," recalled Ms. Caselotti, "I closed my eyes and asked Walt for his help. The next take was perfect."

## Defining the Dwarfs

One of Walt Disney's most challenging problems on *Snow White* was to find definite personalities for the seven dwarfs. The Brothers Grimm had given them very little definition in the original tale, and the closest they'd ever come to having names was in an old play in which they were labeled Flick, Glick, Blick, Snick, Plick, Whick and Queen.

Pinto Colvig, a versatile talent at the studio who had created Goofy's voice a

few years earlier, suggested that since the dwarfs were individual identities, each should possess a name that could also signal a strong personality characteristic. Out of that idea came a long list of possibilities, like Gabby, Jumpy, Sniffy, Puffy, Lazy, Stubby, Shorty, Nifty and Wheezy. All were discussed and most were discarded for various reasons. Deafy, for instance, was scratched because Walt didn't want to play on physical handicaps for comedy.

Finally, the name Doc was chosen for the self-appointed leader of the group because it amiably connoted a person in authority; Sneezy was inspired by actor Billy Gilbert who had often used a comedic sneeze in his previous film roles; Happy was a perfect counterbalance for Grumpy; Sleepy and Bashful inspired all sorts of ideas for good-natured humor.

Dopey posed a problem. Originally, he was envisioned as a sort of Chaplinesque bumbler, but his character kept gravitating toward simple-mindedness. There was also a problem finding a suitable voice. The various possibilities ended up sounding too much like the voice of Doc. Finally, it was suggested that perhaps Dopey shouldn't talk at all. That was the answer, and easy-going Dopey—perhaps the best-loved of the septet—was born. Within the context of the story, it is never resolved that Dopey *can't* talk, just that he never really bothered to try.

Designing the dwarfs was one thing, animating them was another. Animator Frank Thomas remembers that challenging assignment this way: "In the beginning, we would walk down the hallways shaking our heads, muttering 'seven of them.' This was the first time we'd ever had to delineate seven distinct individuals at one time. If you had to do even a simple thing like backing the dwarfs up, you had to do each one differently. Now, how many

ways are there of backing up? You do the first four, and do them great, then you get to Sneezy and you've run out of ideas. It got to be a problem."

Thomas added, "You had to know their personalities to get their attitudes. For example, Sneezy was a solid citizen who took things very seriously and was very responsible. We realized it was very important for every character to have a unique personality."

Their are eight songs in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, all composed by Frank Churchill and Larry Morey and now considered standards: "I'm Wishing" (sung by Snow White at the wishing well of the palace); "One Song" (sung by the Prince); "With a Smile and a Song" (sung by Snow White in the forest to the animals and birds); "Whistle While You Work" (sung by Snow White as she tidies up the dwarfs' house); "Heigh-Ho" (sung by the dwarfs going to and from work at the diamond mine); "Bluddle-Uddle-Um-Dum (The Washing Song)" (sung by the dwarfs as they wash before dinner—at the insistence of Snow White); "The Dwarfs' Yodel Song" (sung and danced by Snow White and the dwarfs in the cottage); "Some Day My Prince Will Come" (sung by Snow White at the end of a long, eventful day).

The songs have been translated into French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and eight other languages and are well known throughout the world.

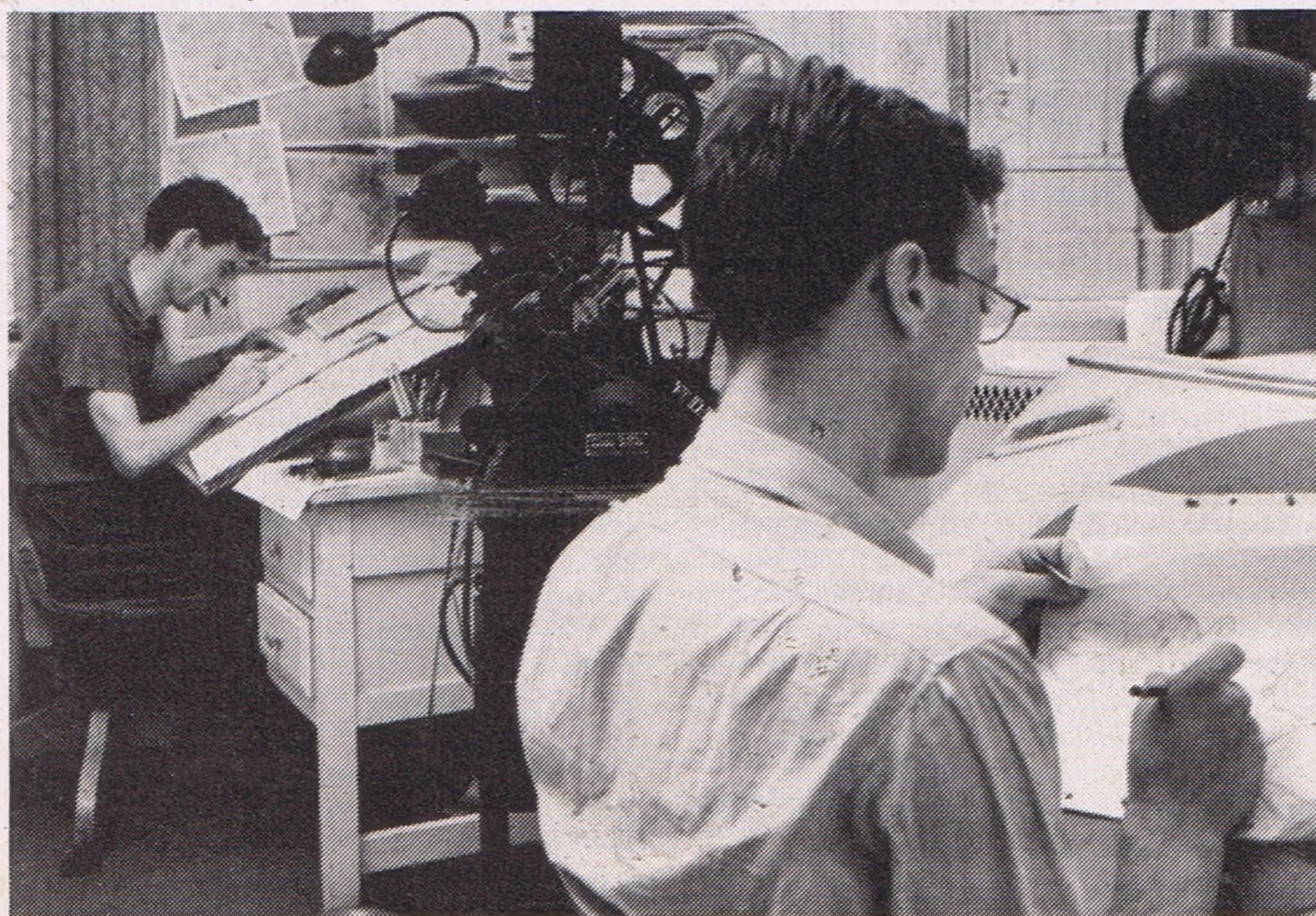
## The Missing Scenes

Early in production, the animators were convinced that the dwarfs would be carrying the story with a continuous stream of funny gags, but as the story reels were assembled it became obvious to everyone that the real drama was the tension between the evil Queen and Snow White. As the film neared completion, Walt was compelled to cut two major sequences which, however entertaining, brought the story to a standstill. One in which the dwarfs eat soup, and another where they build a bed for Snow White.

The soup sequence was to follow on the heels of Snow White's instructions to the little men to wash before supper. They arrive at the table, shiny and clean only to slurp their soup with raucous intensity. When Snow White teaches the men proper table manners, Dopey swallows his spoon. The dwarfs then tackle the problem of how to get the spoon *and* the soap out of Dopey, which he swallowed while washing up.

The elaborately storyboarded bed-building sequence was designed to alleviate the crowded sleeping quarters in the dwarfs forest hut. The little men had given their upstairs beds to Snow White, and were obliged to make themselves as comfortable as possible on the bare floor and benches of the main downstairs room. A long sequence with the forest animals and dwarfs building Snow

Animators Dick Lundy and Berk Anthony at work on a scene with the dwarfs.





White's bed was begun by animator Ward Kimball, but stopped by Disney almost as soon as the storyboards had been approved.

Although entertaining, neither sequence moved the story forward, and they would have made the film too long. Hundreds of feet of animation, both full and partial, representing thousands of hours of painstaking work, had to be left on the cutting room floor. The soup-eating sequence still exists in rough cut form and is seen from time to time on Disney TV specials.

Several other scenes—including the death of Snow White's mother at childbirth and a dream wedding sequence with Snow White and her prince—were prepared but never made it to the screen for similar reasons.

### The Original Premiere

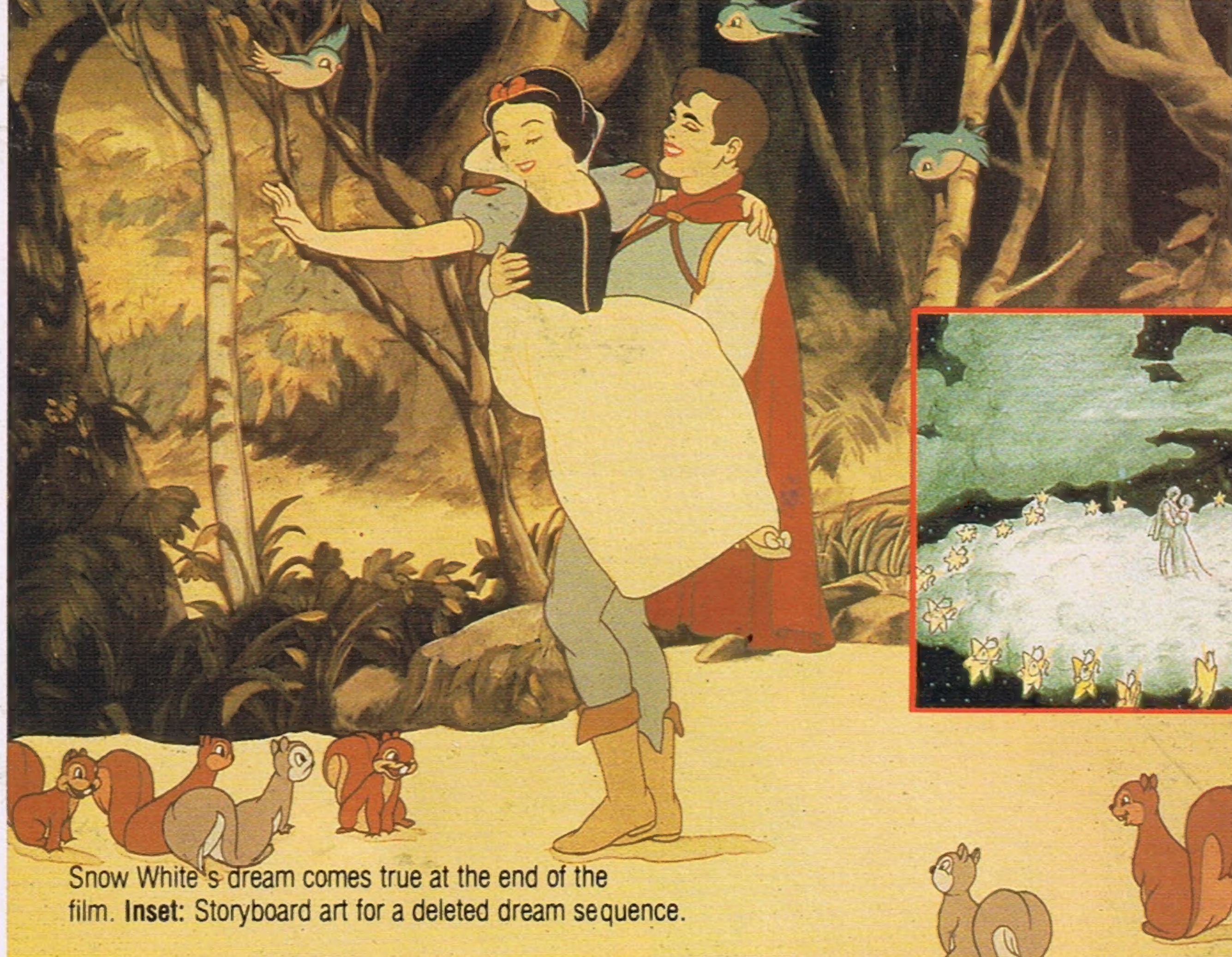
"As the date for the premiere of *Snow White* grew closer, we were running out of money and time," recalls Ken Anderson, then a layout artist and storyman at the studio. "Everyone was putting in overtime to get the picture finished. As I recall, the print from Technicolor arrived at the theater only a few hours before show time."

The big opening was Tuesday, December 21, 1937, at the famous Carthay Circle in Los Angeles. The theater has since been razed and replaced by an office building, but the memory lingers on.

Charlie Chaplin was there (he was preparing his controversial *Great Dictator* for filming)... pint-sized Judy Garland attended (she had just scored a sizeable success singing "You Made Me Love You" to a photograph of Clark Gable in "Broadway Melody of 1938")... Charles Laughton and Marlene Dietrich were there, too, along with every other star of importance in Hollywood. Even the great profile himself, John Barrymore, an artist in his own right, was observed bouncing up and down in his seat during one climactic scene.

It was a critical 83 minutes for Walt Disney. In one evening, he could be wiped out—or holding a grand slam. When it was all over, he not only possessed the

In disguise, the evil queen plays on Snow White's sympathies for a poor, old woman.



Snow White's dream comes true at the end of the film. Inset: Storyboard art for a deleted dream sequence.

winning hand, but history had been made. Animation had come of age.

The late animator/director/producer Wolfgang "Woolie" Reitherman once described the night as follows: "The audience was so taken by the magic of what they saw that they applauded after individual sequences, just as though they were in a legitimate theatre. I've never seen anything quite like it since."

He added: "I ran into Walt at the studio the next morning. Instead of talking about how he could now take a little rest after all the tensions he'd gone through during the four years it took to make *Snow White*, he began talking about the next animated feature and how he wanted to get started right away, and all the new things we were going to do at the studio. There was only one Walt Disney!"

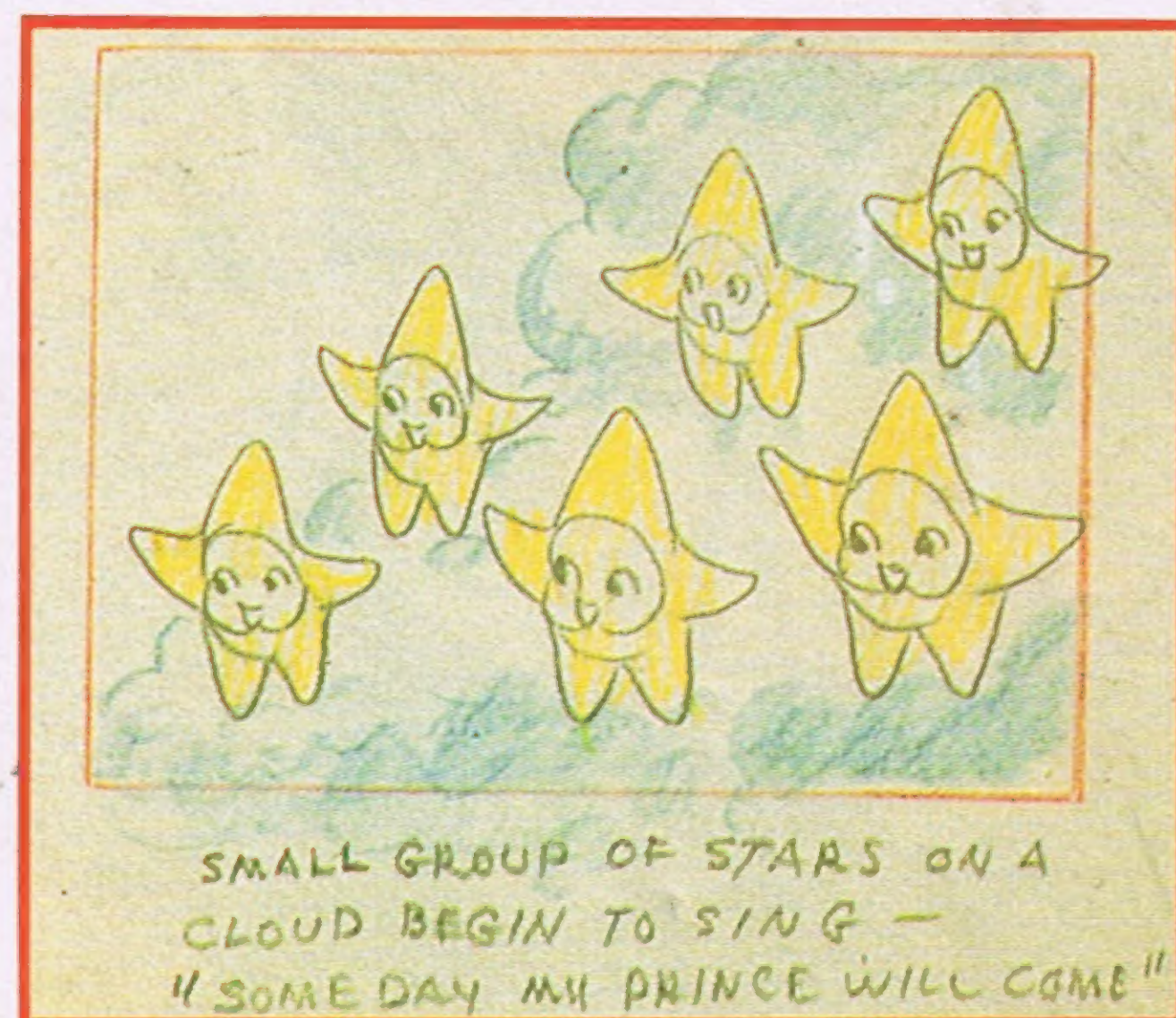
Hollywood's traditional salute to motion picture excellence is the Academy Award on February 23, 1939, Walt Disney won a special trophy for *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*—one large golden Oscar and seven miniature replicas in a stair-step arrangement alongside.

It was inscribed: "To Walt Disney for *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, recognized as a significant screen innovation which has charmed millions and pioneered a great new entertainment field for the motion picture cartoon." The presentation was made by a nine-year-old Shirley Temple, then the bantam-sized Queen of the Movies.

### Reflections on a Classic

More than fifty years after working on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, animator Marc Davis still feels "it is one of the most remarkable accomplishments ever put on the screen. Animation is the most original American art form (along with jazz) and this film did more to advance it than any other."

"Walt had a way of making us do far more than we thought we could," adds



The dwarfs beg Snow White to tell them a story; she spins her dream into a story, which was deleted from the film. The very beginning and end of the story are still in the film.

veteran animator/director Eric Larson. "We all had egos, but Walt had a way of taking those egos and making them work together as a team."

According to Ken Anderson, "Walt was a great storyteller and a tremendous actor. He could have been another Charlie Chaplin if he had chosen to go in that direction. I'll never forget his telling of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* that night on the recording stage and how it inspired us so."

"Woolie" Reitherman (who animated Snow White's magic mirror sequence) recalled: "The atmosphere in the studio was alive with creativity, a marriage of many minds and talents. We fabricated whole characters from thin air. We made life happen in cartoon form. There were no more actors to fall back on to make the cartoon figures click. From our imaginations we created frame by frame spontaneity."

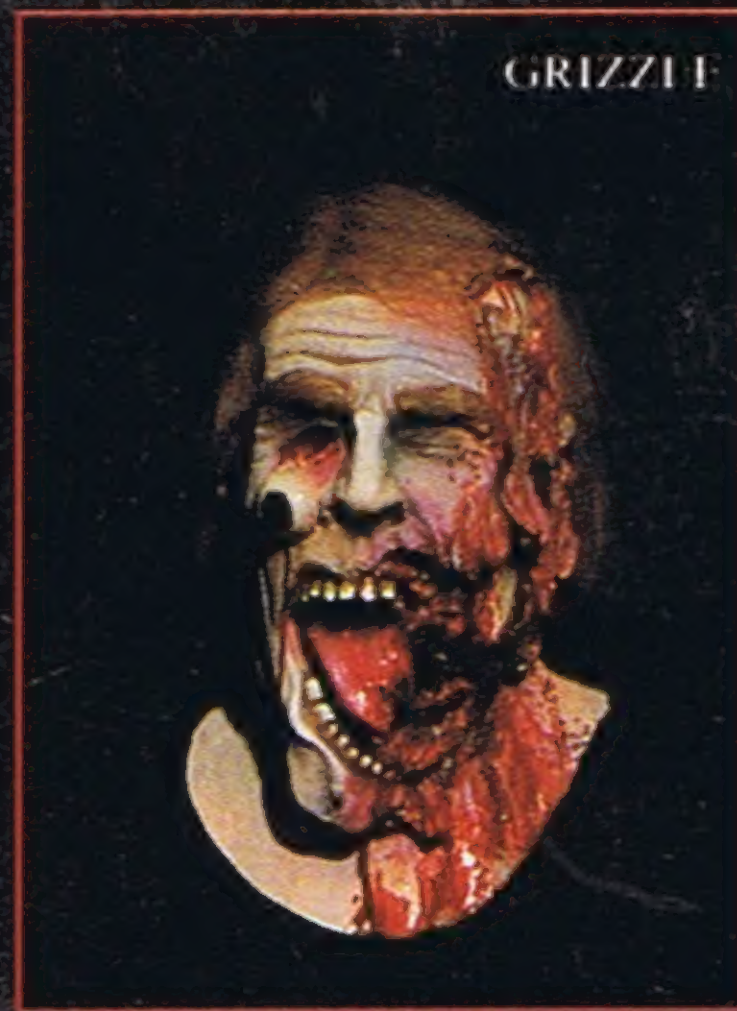
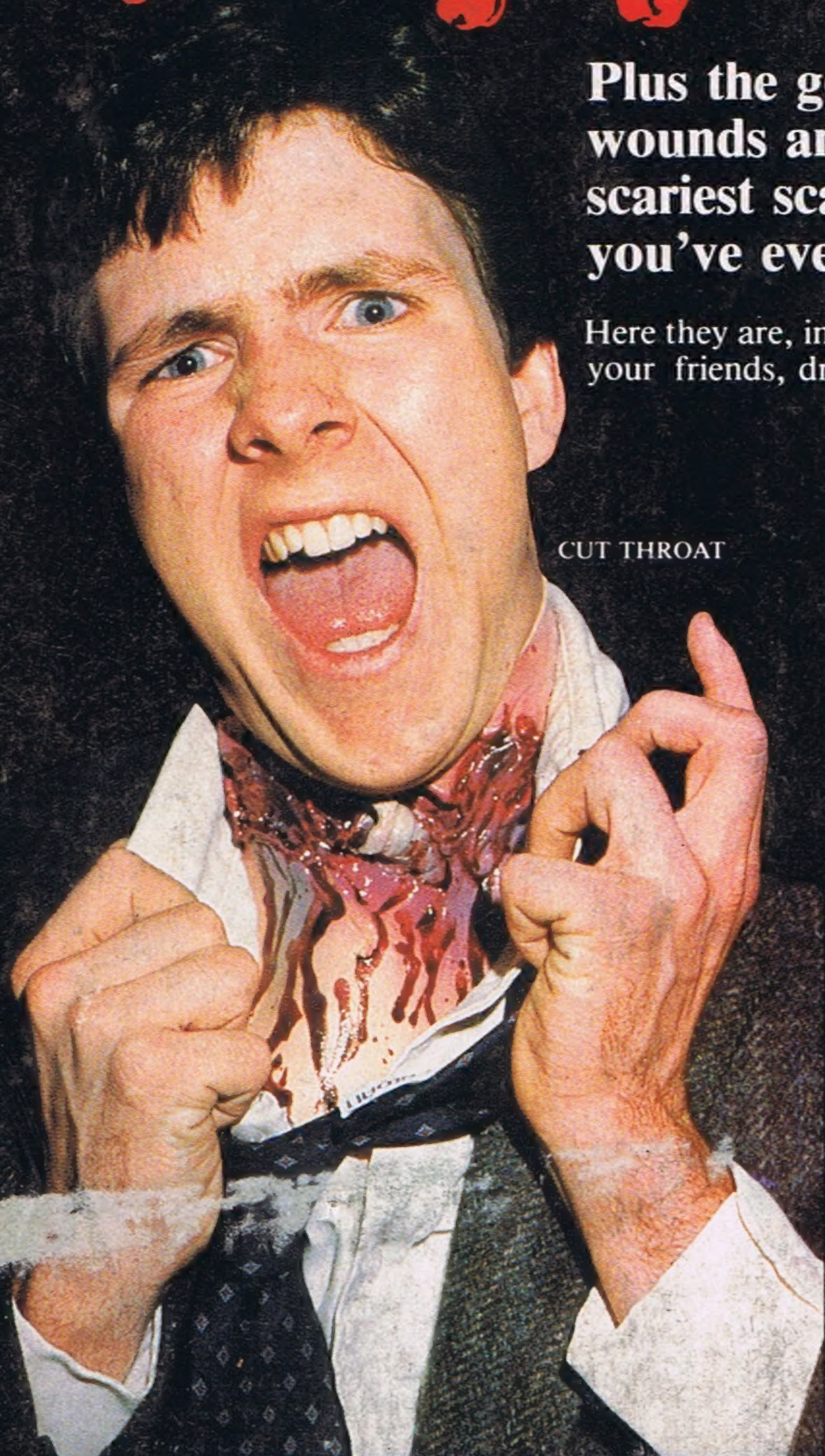
Fifty years after its initial release, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* remains a tribute to the minds and talents that conceived and created it. It is a classic in the truest sense of the word and a timeless tale to be enjoyed for generations to come. **CM**



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## MASSACRE MASKS

Send cash, check or money order to:  
STARLOG PRESS  
475 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

Please indicate quantity of each item being ordered and add \$3.50 per item to cover postage and handling. (Foreign: \$10.00)

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STREET \_\_\_\_\_

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ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

If you don't want to cut out coupon, we will accept written orders.